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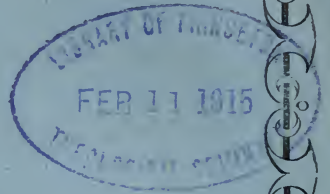
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THE

English



Presbyterian Messenger.

JANUARY, 1858.



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THE ENGLISH
PRESBYTERIAN MESSENGER.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

IN sorrow and sadness the old year has closed and the new year begins. By many of our readers the cup of life has been well nigh drained, and it has been found to be a mingled cup—schoolboy-mates, loved parents, and bosom friends have passed each year away, till the survivors feel well nigh alone. To the grave they may say, in mournful tones—

“Thou hast my better years,
Thou hast my earlier friends, the good, the kind,
Yielded to thee with tears,
The venerable form, the exalted mind.”

But in addition to causes like these, there are special reasons for looking back on the year now closed. The years that preceded it were times of public calamity. War raged in the Crimea, and a splendid army, though crowned with victory oftentimes, by mismanagement and neglect, was well nigh lost to the empire, and the lustre of our national prestige was dimmed in Europe. The Crimean war made us poorer as a nation by one hundred millions sterling; and it robbed also the cottages and baronial halls of Britain of their bravest sons.

The year 1857 has, we think, been still more terrible than any of its predecessors. The calamity has been twofold. The Indian mutiny—a cloud in a summer sky, all unexpected, scarce believed in when first announced, to be speedily “stamped out,” as statesmen assured us—by massacres unparalleled in the history of civilised nations, and in which woman’s wail, mingled with the dying groans of warriors treacherously cut down by battles, by siege, by heroic endurance, mingled with sorrows that never can be told—this will ever be a *dark* year in England’s annals. Let us add to this a commercial crisis, by which want has come upon thousands of families, as an armed man; and let us also look at the thick cloud which hangs over our trade as the new year opens, and then the most thoughtless must feel that this is a time to be serious, and to lay to heart the lessons suggested by the times on which we have fallen.

1. *The nation has been both guilty and impenitent.* That is the solemn truth which we should now lay to heart. Past chastisements were *not* improved, past sins were *not* thoroughly repented of, and, therefore, the

hand of that great Governor—who deals with nations as such, retributively in *this* world—has been stretched out still. In the early part of the past year, the discoveries made of gigantic frauds seemed to be attended with no real or general abandonment of unprincipled speculation, and making haste to be rich; and never do we remember the fashionable world more mad upon its idols, than just before the news of the Indian outbreak burst upon us. Society has been proved to be largely corrupted and demoralised; and because iniquity has abounded, the love of many professing Christians has waxed cold. The tendency amongst members of Christian churches to a lax observance of the Sabbath, to conformity to the world, extravagance and display, has been general, both in England and the United States, for a long period preceding present troubles.

2. It becomes us to lay to heart, *that this is a time for special humiliation, and for unfeigned repentance.* It is true, we have had a national fast day, but the days for fasting and mourning, or of earnest deprecation of other judgments are not over. And if Christians lay not to heart more than ever *their individual sins*, their family sins, and then the nation's transgressions, and if the Lord's fierce anger is not averted by a general response to his call and rod—may we not fear that greater calamities in the dark future await our country? Great as our chastisements have been, they might be even heavier. England, if proud and impenitent, may say, after the cessation of the present tempest, *may* say in her heart as she sits in festal robes "I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." But there is One who even now, to a nation favoured like our own, has sent his terror and the scourge of an invading foe, and the land has been a wilderness, because they perseveringly went on in their iniquity. God reigns, and what nation can stand before him!

"Those revolutions," says D'Aubigné, "which prostrate royal races, and even whole nations in the dust: those vast remains that meet us in the midst of desert lands; those majestic ruins apparent on the field of humanity: do they not cry aloud, **GOD IN HISTORY?**" Oh that *we* would but take warning!

3. *There is great need of a true religious revival.* We do not desire to underrate on the one hand, or exaggerate on the other. But notwithstanding the unceasing influence of evangelical preaching and teaching over the masses, the work of Sabbath, and Daily, and Ragged schools, still we fear that "times of refreshing" as in apostolic days, as in the last age in England and Wales, are still wanting. Ministers with moving hearts see comparatively few of the young pressing into the kingdom, and *conversion* under the preaching of the gospel is the exception rather than the rule among the congregations of the kingdom met on the Lord's day. It is to be feared that family religion is declining; even in households where it has hitherto prevailed, and where the household altar is set up, there is but too often laid on it a cold-hearted and formal sacrifice. If, again, the prayer-meeting is the pulse of a church's life, what are we to think of the spiritual vitality of those churches that either have no stated meetings for united prayer at all, or whose members by a majority absent themselves?

While we love our Presbyterian system as strongly as ever, as the friend of both order and liberty—while we recognise with gratitude the hopeful and encouraging fact that our students are full of promise, the professors men of God, as well as specially qualified for their noble

calling, and that our ministers all preach, and we trust we may add, all *love*, the one "form of sound words"—yet still we feel that, as a Church, we need revival. A revival is not necessarily a work, or a season of excitement, of anxious seats and protracted meetings. But the two main characteristics of a genuine religion are—first, the awakening of sleeping sinners; second, an intensifying of spiritual life in those who are already alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And if we would have the first—if ministers would preach with enlarged success—if God's people would manfully exult over victories won over home-heathenism without, and formalism within, the Church's visible pale, let them lay it to heart, that results like these must be preceded by a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit brought down upon themselves. Once that Christian ministers, office-bearers, and communicants are themselves thoroughly awake, and preach, and pray, and wrestle accordingly, and all this accompanied by lowly confessions of unworthiness, and fresh application to Him who can cleanse and restore, we may surely hope to see a quickening of dead souls under the ministry of the word.

A concert for prayer, beginning on the 25th ult., and extending over the early days of the new year, is now, as in past times, engaging many devout hearts before the throne of grace. The late Rev. Mr. Stuart, of the Church of England, was wont to send out annually an address, inviting Christians to united prayer, and the response was always cheering. Though his voice speaks, though his pen appeals, no longer, yet why should not Christians still, even without a public invitation, begin the year with *special* supplication? May we not hope that thus, greater judgments than any yet experienced could be averted, and that showers of blessings would come down on the church and the world?

Besides ordinary meetings of Presbyteries and Sessions, might not special meetings be held of office-bearers, to inquire into, and report of, the state of religion within their respective bounds, as well as to pray together, and to take counsel together? The experiment has been partially tried; let it be extended. We submit that earnestness among ministers, office-bearers, and people, true spirituality, and zeal for the divine glory, would be powerfully promoted by such reunions as these.

4. *There is much to encourage in the signs of the times.* India will now become a great field for Christian missions, and for vernacular education leavened with evangelical truth. Many by reason of public calamities and private sorrows have been brought to consider their ways. God's purposes cannot be arrested, and he has mercy in store for our country and the world. Let us only be faithful to our trust, and do our part valiantly in that great struggle, whose millennial issues seem, by the very thickening of the fight, not far away.

THE CHURCH'S PERMANENCE, A PROOF OF THE BEING AND PROVIDENCE OF JESUS CHRIST.

JESUS CHRIST, it has been finely remarked, is the God of man. He it is with whom man has to transact the business of his soul; he with whom, when he deals with God, he alone ventures to deal. We speak of scepticism as theism. It professes to believe in a great First Cause, in some mysterious Power, whom it neither knows nor can know. That alone we speak of

as faith, which, believing in God, believes also in Jesus Christ; that alone we acknowledge as true religion which worships Jesus Christ; and they alone the worshippers of the true God, who, by way of emphasis, are called Christians.

All Christians confess this. Every regenerated soul confesses that it owes its existence as such to Jesus Christ, that he not only laid the foundation on which its hopes rest, but called it to the enjoyment of these hopes, keeps them alive and nourishes them, and that, as truly as the infant is dependent for its life on its mother's milk, so does it look to him for that fuel which keeps alive within the light of life. The Church—that is, the body of believers—acknowledges him as its Founder, looks to him as its head, acknowledges that she owes all to him, and continually looks to him for all. When she works she looks to him for strength, when she is in perplexity she looks to him for guidance, when she is in trouble she looks to him for deliverance, and when she triumphs ascribes all the glory to him. The intimacy of this relationship cannot be exaggerated according to her own confession; for she speaks of it in the strongest terms—as that of a king to his subjects, that of a captain to his army, that of a head to the body, that of a husband to his wife, that of an elder brother to his brethren, that of a father to his children. To blot him out of the firmament of the church would be, according to this, a calamity as disastrous to her life as to withdraw the sun from the firmament of the earth—every condition of life would depart along with it, and this would become the charnel house of death.

Such is the church's own confession. Have we any reason to doubt the fact? Is her nature, are her peculiarities, is her history such that we cannot acknowledge the fact of her existence without necessarily admitting that all she says of her Lord is true? Could she have been born, could she have lived so long, could she enjoy her present prospects of increasing life, without granting that her Founder and Author is "He who liveth and was dead, and behold is alive for evermore, having the keys of hell and of death?" Does, in other words, the continued existence of the church, demonstrate the being and providence of Jesus Christ? We say it does. Given the church, and the being and providence of Jesus Christ follow as a necessary conclusion—just as surely as an effect proclaims a cause, as a work proclaims a workman, as a design proclaims a designer, or as a burning lamp tells of a hand that lights it, and continually supplies it with oil.

Let us, then, endeavour to illustrate this. Let us see whether a close examination will bear out this conclusion. Let us see whether we cannot gather from this field some confirmation of our faith and hope. And, in this effort, it will be manifest that we are attempting to do, with reference to Christ, that which has often been done with reference to the being and attributes of God—that which Paul first set the example of doing. He tells us that "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." That is to say, "the things that are made," the works of creation and providence, do speak of God and proclaim his eternal power and Godhead; and this they do so loudly that the heathen are without excuse for their gross wickedness and idolatries. If they had looked at the things which are seen, they would not have been so ignorant of the Unseen—that is God. Now, in like manner, Jesus Christ is invisible. We, under the gospel dispensation, can see his works and hear his voice in the record and revelation which he has given

us of himself in his word. But this also is worthy of our attention, and will confirm our faith, even those works of his which are patent to us—that special handiwork of his, his Church. For, just as the things that are made—the visible creation, the material universe—speak of God, and proclaim his eternal power and Godhead in such a manner that they are without excuse who fail to worship him; so the visible things of Jesus Christ—“his body”—speak of his life and labours even still more loudly, and they are still more without excuse who fail to believe in him.

Now, in illustrating this proposition, we shall consider two of the most remarkable features of the church—her nature and her history, and we shall then see whether our conclusion is an inevitable and necessary one. But we must defer this discussion till next month.

Miscellaneous Papers.

(Original and Selected.)

VISIT TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA.

BY THE REV. G. J. C. DUNCAN, OF GREENWICH.

It is known to some of your readers that soon after the rising of our last Synod, I paid a visit to the Western World; and as I have been repeatedly requested to give in your pages my impressions of the state of religion in those parts that I visited, especially among our Presbyterian brethren, I very gladly avail myself of your indulgence by sending the following remarks.

Confining myself at present to Canada, I found there the good cause in full and vigorous activity. There is scarcely a rising town of any importance which has not its Presbyterian Church, and in the larger cities two or more flourishing congregations of the Presbyterian family may be found. I do not wish to disparage other sections of the Christian Church, which in their several spheres are earnestly and efficiently carrying on the work of the gospel, but I believe there is little doubt that our mode of church government and discipline has already proved itself peculiarly suited to the Canadian field.

The people of this province are somewhat democratic in their tendencies, yet heartily loyal to the British Crown. They show a great deal of vigour in all their public proceedings, and a remarkable amount of

practical sagacity in their mode of conducting business. They mingle the energy and enterprise of their Yankee neighbours with the characteristic prudence of the Scotch, from whom so large a proportion of the inhabitants derive their origin. And to such a people our Church is admirably adapted. It is all the more so, because it is not an aristocratic and exclusive system deriving any prestige from stately and glittering accompaniments—and because, while thoroughly popular, it is at the same time conservative, eminently favourable to order—all its traditions being on the side of Christian loyalty. It harmonises with the acute intelligence of the people by its strong attachment to the cause of popular education, and by the high standard of intellectual acquirement which it demands in its ministers, tending constantly to develop among their flocks the reflective powers as well as the religious and moral feelings. All this is just what such a community require, and hence the rapid increase and growing prosperity of the Presbyterian cause.

A few years ago, the State withdrew all pecuniary support from the Established Churches, giving a fair field to each mem-

ber of the Christian sisterhood; and the aptitude of our well-tried system thus finds free scope for its proper development in the colony.

At the meeting of Synod in Kingston, I enjoyed an opportunity of the most gratifying kind of judging of the inner working of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. This court greatly resembles our own. There is a slight superiority in numbers, and the Scottish element greatly predominates, the effect of which is enhanced in the Synod by the marked Scottish dialect of the native Canadian portion of the members. The public questions agitated are very much the same as those with which English Presbyterians have lately been conversant—College matters, Church Extension, Missions, both Foreign and Domestic, and *the Organ*. The admirable system of schools adopted by the provincial Legislature, has relieved the Church of all anxiety and expense on this score. There were several matters similar to those which yearly vex our own Synod, arising out of local disturbances or troubles, and the whole business was carried on so much with the same good feeling and judgment to which we are accustomed in England, that I could easily have persuaded myself I was seated with my brethren in our Synod at home. The Organ question was argued in a case resembling in many points the one which has lately occupied so much of our own attention, and the battle for their musical instrument was vigorously fought both by the minister and the elder of the innovating congregation. But no sooner was the judgment of the supreme court, requiring its removal, pronounced, than they both declared their loyal resolution to carry it out in good faith. The people also, as I afterwards learnt, like true blue Presbyterians, gave an unrestricted and ungrudging obedience to the decision.

The College in Toronto, presided over by Dr. Willis and Dr. Burns, is rearing a fair proportion of students for the ministry, and a considerable proportion of the clergy are already native Canadians, whom piety, talent, and characteristic energy, give good promise of a progressive and successful future. The Church is keeping fully abreast of the population, and when the expected union with the United Presbyterians is con-

summated—an event evidently not far distant—her position as among the foremost of the great Christian agencies of the province, will be well secured.

There are several spheres of special prominence which will probably, for some years to come, make demands on the Churches at home for their supply. The native preachers are as yet too young, and too few, to furnish a sufficiency of such men of mark and standing as are needed for Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton, Montreal, and Quebec. There are several important vacancies at the present moment waiting anxiously for suitable ministers, who are not likely to be found except in Scotland. Toronto is one of these, with a very handsome church and a large and most respectable congregation, and everything to recommend it; this post has, during the past year, been left to languish for want of a pastor. Nothing is needed here but the right man, with God's blessing, to make the sphere as large and as influential as any to be found in a colonial field. Attached to the church by the foresight of its builders, is a very considerable property, which in a few years will probably rise to a sufficient annual value to pay stipend and all expenses, thus leaving the congregation free to work beyond their own bonds for the glory of Christ. There are few fields either at home or abroad, which offer more attractions to a minister of suitable gifts, who feels free to devote his talents, acquirements, and time to the work, than Toronto, and I cannot but regret that there should be any difficulty or delay in securing the right man for so important a place. The church at home has hitherto failed to appreciate Canada at its real worth.

I cannot close this imperfect notice without expressing my gratitude for the kind and cordial reception accorded to me by the Synod, when I appeared as the deputy of the English Presbyterian Church, bearing their affectionate greetings to the assembled brethren. It was most cheering to meet several brethren with whom I had held pleasant intercourse in our Synod at home, or in Church Courts in Scotland, and to grasp the friendly hand of welcome tendered by them so far across the sea. Mr. Kemp, formerly of Bolton, now of Montreal, I found vigorous as ever, and exercising a valuable influence not only in the Synod,

but as editor of the *Canadian Presbyterian*, a valuable monthly periodical. Mr. Clark, formerly of Maxwelltown, now of Quebec, keeps still the honoured place he always held at home in every community in which his lot was cast; and others, who might be named, did space allow, are, with equal consistency, holding on in their Christian course of ministerial fidelity and usefulness. On the whole, this visit has proved, in all respects, gratifying at the time, and pleasing in the review. No Church seems to be more worthy of our good wishes or our kindest sympathy than that of Canada.

THE LIMIT SET.

BY THE REV. W. C. BURNS.

(From a *Hearer's Notes*.)

AGAIN, He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, "To-day," after so long a time; as it is said, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." The words here quoted are, as we see from the text itself, from the book of Psalms. They form part of an exhortation to the church in Israel from Jehovah, the Head of the church, warning them from the fate of their unbelieving and rebellious forefathers, not to abuse his long-suffering, nor to presume upon his grace by hardening their hearts through the deceitful nature and soul-blinding influence of sin.

An offer of mercy had been made to Israel. All the day Jehovah had stretched out his hands to a disobedient and gain-saying people, who had, through unbelief, refused to enter in, having not only killed the prophets and stoned them which were sent unto them, but crucified the Holy and the Just One. And, my dear friends, having persisted in this they were given over to a reprobate mind, God swearing in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest. Ah! it is a fearful thing when God gives a man over, when, while yet the short day of life in this world lasts, the day of grace has fled, fled for ever, when the long-suffering Immanuel ceases to knock at the door of the heart, when the last striving of his Spirit is over, and Jehovah swears in wrath that that soul *shall not* enter in.

My friends, your day of grace has lasted long; many are the offers of pardon and reconciliation, many the decla-

rations of grace and mercy, many the proclamations of forgiveness and of peace that have been repeated in your ears—again and again, again and again. They have come from your own minister, by other ministers, by religious friends, by reading, by hearing, by conscience—ay, and by the very Spirit of Jehovah himself, in the hearing of your outward ear, and in the hearing of your inward heart; and yet, through unbelief, are you sitting here this very evening in your natural state, dead asleep, unpardoned, unjustified, impenitent, un sanctified, unchanged—children of wrath, exposed to the thunders of Jehovah's vengeance, and without a covert, without a shelter, without a hope.—AGAIN, HE LIMITED A CERTAIN DAY.

The idea which these words convey is inexpressibly sweet and comforting in one sense, though truly awful in another. We may just suppose a case. A man is going fast along a road; a rebel and disobedient. His master says to him "If you *stop* and *turn*, before you come to such and such a point, *I will* forgive you." Yet the man refuses, persists, and runs madly on. The kind master, unwilling to see his servant ruined, in his love, as it were, extends the point of turning, stretches the limit to the utmost, and places the boundary line of life further on in hopes to reclaim the lost wanderer. So it is, beloved friends, with your God. A thousand times has he removed the line which finally excludes from his mercy; every sermon he has extended it; every Sabbath has seen it still distant. And this night again he limiteth a certain day—a day of mercy and pardon, a day of love and grace. But this day may be the last. His long-suffering, great and marvellous as it is, does know a limitation and an end. It may be that God is saying of you, impenitent sinner, that if to-day you turn not, he shall swear in his wrath you shall never, never enter into his rest. "To-day, after so long a time." Ah! sinner, can you stand that? Listen how he pleads with you, *after so long a time*. Yes, you know it has been long—long has he waited, long has he pleaded with you, long has he besought you, and yet "you are keeping him at the door of your heart." To-day if ye *will* hear his voice. The word "will" should be more properly rendered "shall," expressing merely the possibility or event of hearing God's voice, and not, as is often thought, the inclination or

willingness to hear it. For instance, there are thousands whom God in his sovereignty never permits to hear his voice. These words are therefore used in the sense of, *If ye shall hear, If ye shall be permitted to hear his voice.* And in a sense these words may be addressed to all of you. Ah! there are many here who have never yet heard God's voice. Thousands are dying daily who, though a preached gospel has rung in their ears from the cradle to the grave, have never heard in their hearts a single word of God. There is nothing which man is naturally so unwilling to listen to as to the words of God. He will listen with avidity to anything else; he will listen to his friends, listen to tales about his neighbours, listen to evil and listen to good. Yes, he will come to the church and listen to the minister—few are unwilling to do that; he will come to the courts of Jehovah, saying, "I must go and hear a sermon; I wonder what the minister will say to us to-day." And so long as the minister tells him something new, so long as he goes on fluently, the man will be quite pleased, and even, perhaps, talk with his family about how the minister pleased him, and what the minister said. Ay, but notice the difference when the minister happens to rehearse in a people's hearing the words of Jehovah HIMSELF, the reading of *his* word is listened to with a sleepy carelessness that shows the man regards it not; and then, if the minister happens to quote a passage from that word of God, ah! you may see by the man's expression that it's a sort of interruption to the thread of the discourse, an uninteresting, though, perhaps, necessary intrusion of what is merely used to show that a fact's correct or a doctrine true. Friends, don't your consciences tell you that what we are saying is true? Don't deny it. You know you feel it; and yet, what madness, what folly is this!

Suppose that one of the inmates of the palace of our Queen were observed paying particular attention whenever any of the attendants or household spoke, but whenever the Queen spoke, seemed inattentive and wishing the interruption were over,—such a thing was never heard of; and yet, Sabbath after Sabbath, and year after year, do you come into the house of God, and listen to his servants, but the Master of the house you will not hear, you will not obey. You will listen to the words of any of his

creatures, but when Jehovah speaks—ah, it's not worth your while to pay the deference you do to a fellow-mortal. Now his voice may be heard by you to-night; the ears of the deafest sinner in this house may be unstopped, if he will not persist in hardening his heart against the strivings of the Spirit. If ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. The heart of man, my dear friends, is as hard as stone. It cannot be softened by any natural process whatsoever. It never can be melted. It is possible, so to speak, to break it in pieces, just as by violence you may break any hard substance; but, ah! it won't melt, it won't bend, it won't yield but to the fire of the love of the gospel. The mere outward hearing of the word won't do it. It may seem to have one effect, but the man does not hear the word as the voice of God. The heart is like the hard anvil; when struck by the hammer there is a great sound made and some sparks are emitted, but the anvil is hard still. Preaching has no more effect upon a soul than the striking of a hammer has upon the anvil; it only makes a sound. But still, my dear friends, hard as our hearts by nature are, it is possible to make them harder still. *Harden not your hearts.* True, we received them at the first hard as adamant as to any capability of loving and of serving God, and their nature is unchangeable but by the power which creates us anew in Christ Jesus; but then there is a second hardening of the heart already hard. There are various means which tend to this:—As,

First—*Indifferent hearing.* We have already spoken of this, but it is so important that we would seek to impress it still more upon you. It is an awful thing to shut the ear against the voice of God when he speaks by his word and by his ministers. You do not know how few may be your opportunities. There may be some before me to whom *this* is the limited period, whose day of hope is quickly sinking down to the night of despair and darkness; but to whom Jehovah is still, though for the last time saying—*Harden not your hearts.* How do you know, sinner, that he is not saying that to you, and yet, there you are as thoughtless and as unconcerned—as deaf as ever. It is awful when a soul thus begins to harden under the repeated strivings of the Spirit and the gracious calls of the gospel. Some of you here

are in that state. Fellow-sinner, don't harden your heart against another call. You say, "It is hard already." I believe it well; yes, hard as these rocks under your feet, but don't let it get harder still. Poor sinner, you remember the day when it was not quite so hard, when it could shrink from sin, when you thought it could even melt at the love of Immanuel? Ah! you say, "I remember when it was not so icy cold, and insensible as it is now. I remember when a father's frown could move me, when a mother's tears could make me weep, and when a mother's prayers could touch my heart. I remember when the sermons which I heard used to impress me and fill me with alarm and sorrow; but now, the minister may say what he likes, it's all one, you'll never make me feel now—nothing, nothing can soften a hardened sinner's heart." Ah! yes, dear fellow-sinner, *something can*. If God speaks to you *then* you will feel, and your heart will begin to break, and your eyes begin to weep. Oh! that God would speak home to your conscience. If any of you feel that he is doing so, sinners, harden not your hearts.

Again, *sinning against light* hardens the heart—persisting in any course of sin, or in any habits of sin, and yielding to temptation when conscience and the word of God clearly and distinctly point out to you that what you are doing is wrong, opposed to the will of God, and in direct disobedience to his law. Nothing hardens the heart more than sin, felt to be sin, and yet persisted and delighted in.

Further, *the rejection of Christ* hardens the heart. Indeed, nothing is so hardening as the rejection of Immanuel. True, it does not make *His* heart the less full of love to you, or the less willing to receive you. Ah no! for though you have kept him waiting long, he is waiting still. But every fresh call to come to Christ, every new offer of mercy that you reject, just adds another link to the chain with which Satan binds you, and makes it the less probable that you will ever be taken from his grasp.

Have I received Christ or am I rejecting him? Answer this to yourselves. You say, "Of course I am a Christian; I acknowledge Christ as my Saviour; I have always done it." Friend! you deceive yourself. A faith, *of course*, is no faith at all. Have you received Christ or are you rejecting him? Perhaps you

do not know what the term means. Were you offered Christ on one hand and everything else on the other, would you take Christ above all, before all, instead of all, or part with him and take the world? Do you love Christ or your earthly possessions, your lands, your houses, the best? Which would you part with? Would you part with your dearest companion on earth sooner than give up Christ? Would you part with father, mother, sister, brother, lands, possessions, *all*, rather than part with HIM? If you would, then you have taken Christ for your portion; you are not rejecting him.

And are you trusting to Christ alone, or to duties half, and half to Christ? If the latter, you are rejecting Christ. Would you like, as I know some would, to have Christ for your Priest to satisfy divine justice, without having him for your Prophet and King? If you would, you are rejecting Christ.

But what is it to receive Christ? To be willing to take his righteousness for your whole salvation, refuge, and hope, to take him as your Priest to plead for you, your Prophet to instruct and guide you in the path of his commandments, and your King to govern you by setting his throne in your heart—that is to receive Christ. Are you doing this? Have you ever done it? Are you willing to do it now? Ah! how little value does the poor blind world set on Christ! Is there not something marvellous in the little value sinners have for a Saviour!

If you were told to-night that all the lands that surround your dwellings were your own, would not your heart leap for joy? And yet there is a greater treasure offered you to-night, full and free, not only for the asking, but for the mere will to receive it. Ah! yes; Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, is offered to you. He knocks to-night, he asks you to open the door, and says, If any man hear my voice. See the distinction again made here. *If any man hear my voice*. Every one in this house hears the preacher's voice declaring in his ear the words of Jesus; but are any hearing his voice in their hearts? Is Jesus speaking to you, beloved friends? If he be, harden not your hearts; for he says, If any man hear my voice *and open the door*, I will come into him and sup with him, and he with me. Who is yielding to Immanuel's still small voice of love? Which of you is saying, "Come,

Lord Jesus, come quickly?" Your heart is never shut against the love of a friend: it is ever open to words of kindness—open to the voice of parent and friend—open to the love of a wife, a husband, a child, a brother, a sister; but, oh! it is closed against Immanuel. Why is it so? For what is so natural as that the heart of the creature should be open to the Creator, the heart of the sinner to the Saviour? Are we not to get one soul for Christ from your lovely glen? We would fain get one from these mountains. The scenes you dwell among are lovely scenes. The mountains and the valleys, the rocks that surround you, are beautiful indeed; but there is a sight that is lovelier still. No sight in the universe is half so lovely as the sight of a soul fleeing to Christ—coming with its whole burden of sin, casting it on him, and taking refuge and finding safety in the everlasting arms. Open up to him these sealed hearts; let them go out towards him, and take him for your portion now and for ever. If you reject him now, the consequence *may* be that the Spirit will no longer strive with you; or if, in infinite mercy, the offer be made to you a few times more, and you reject him still, the consequence *must* be that Jehovah shall swear in his wrath that you, through unbelief, shall not enter into his rest.

LUTHER'S HYMN.

LUTHER'S HYMN, *Ein feste Berg ist unser Gott*, was sung at the Berlin Conference. It was probably composed in 1529. The Rev. William M. Bunting, son of the Rev. Dr. Bunting, has written a fine English version of this hymn, retaining the measure of the original as well as much of its spirit, so that it can be sung in our language to the same tune with the German.

"EIN' FESTE BERG IST UNSER GOTT."

A strong tower is the Lord our God,
To shelter and defend us:
Our shield his arm, our sword his rod,
Against our foes befriending us:
That ancient enemy,
His gathering power we see,
His terrors and his toils,
Yet victory with its spoils,
Not earth, but Heaven, shall send us!

Though wrestling with the wrath of hell,
No might of man avail us:

Our captain is Immanuel,
And angel comrades hail us!
Still challenge ye his name?
"Christ in the flesh who came"—
"The Lord, the Lord of hosts!"
Our cause his succour boasts,
And God shall never fail us!

Though earth by peopling fiends be trod,
Embattled all, yet hidden;
And though their proud usurping god
O'er thrones and shrines have stridden;
Nay, let them stand reveal'd,
And darken all the field;
We fear not: fall they must!
The Word, wherein we trust,
Their triumph hath forbidden.

While mighty truth with us remains,
Hell's arts shall move us never;
Nor parting friendships, honours, gains,
Our love from Jesus sever:
They leave us when they part,
With him, a peaceful heart;
And when from death we rise,
Death yields us, as *he* dies,
The crown of life for ever!

A MOTHER'S DISCIPLINE.

I HAD a son, a fair-haired, gentle child. My young life had been a pilgrimage of weariness and care, and this child was my first-born joy. He was two years old, when I had a little baby daughter, with brown hair, and large blue eyes, which had an unearthly expression, of strange, strange loveliness. She was all the world to her little brother, who would sit for hours, and gaze in loving wonder on her quiet face.

My noble boy was taken sick, and when I sent for the physician, he told me he had the scarlet fever, that fearful enemy of a fond mother. For two weeks I watched him, separated from my little girl, lest she too might catch the disease, and by his sick bed first learned to pray, and oh! how fervently I prayed that the Great Physician would spare my child! A ray of hope dawned, but was soon darkened by the knowledge that inflammation of the lungs had followed the other disease.

Three days he lay all unconscious, and when they told me I must give him back to God, I cried "Oh! spare him, and I will dedicate myself, and him, to thee." He lived. I had to teach him every thing anew, for he had forgotten all he had learned; and with an over-

flowing heart I taught him again to talk and walk.

Months rolled on, my little girl began to lisp her mother's name, and call, in playful glee, her brother. Oh! she was passing lovely! my children were my idols. I forgot their Maker, I forgot my promise—ay, I even forgot to pray, and taught them not their first great duty.

Suddenly, my prattling daughter was cast down, and in an hour I saw the presence of the same disease that had attacked her brother. She grew worse and worse—the memory of a broken vow pressed like an incubus on my spirit; and I could not pray. I never left her little crib. She would raise her large eyes to mine, and entreat me to relieve her sufferings; but I was as powerless to ease her pain as I was to save her life; for one dark, drear night, long after silence and sleep had settled over the great city, my little treasure died, and tearless, I sat alone with Death till morning.

Oh! parents, forsake not the God of your children; love them, but love them not to his exclusion. My agony and grief at the loss of my cherished child were beyond all description—an agony and grief redoubled by the remorseful memories of broken vows and neglected duties. It was a severe school at which I learnt my first lesson. Learn it, you, before the destroyer come to punish your neglect; and if he do come, you will find a comfort in that Friend that I forsook.

M.

PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

To hear the prayers and remarks often made at prayer meetings, one would think the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit was practically lost sight of. Men pray, not for the Holy Spirit, but for the "influences of the Spirit." This is an expression nowhere to be found in the Scriptures; and the impression seems to be, not of communication with a *person* having a distinct individuality, but of a certain undefinable *influence*, exerted upon the mind and heart of man. But the scriptural idea is that of a Divine Agent, the Holy Spirit, communicating with the soul, enlightening the mind, striving with the heart, and leading the soul upward to God. It seems to me that this is a far more stirring and forcible idea than

that of an undefinable influence. "The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity," dwelling in us, and making our bodies his temple, is the scriptural idea of the intercourse of the Spirit with true Christians. And this is what is promised, when Christ says the Father is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. And what an awful yet delightful thought! To be guided by the Spirit of God; to have him dwelling in us, to quicken our consciences, to warn us of danger, to stir us up to duty, to strengthen our graces, to witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and to work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. And this honour have all his saints! This is what Christ means, when he says, "The water that I shall give them, shall be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life!"

AFFECTING INCIDENT IN THE FIRST RELIEF OF LUCKNOW.

I GIVE you the following account of the relief of Lucknow, as described by a lady, one of the rescued party:—"On every side death stared us in the face; no human skill could avert it any longer. We saw the moment approach when we must bid farewell to earth, yet without feeling that unutterable horror which must have been experienced by the unhappy victims at Cawnpore. We were resolved rather to die than to yield, and were fully persuaded that in twenty-four hours all would be over. The engineers had said so, and all knew the worst. We women strove to encourage each other, and to perform the light duties which had been assigned to us, such as conveying orders to the batteries and supplying the men with provisions, especially cups of coffee, which we prepared day and night. I had gone out to try and make myself useful, in company with Jessie Brown, the wife of a corporal in my husband's regiment. Poor Jessie had been in a state of restless excitement all through the siege, and had fallen away visibly within the last few days. A constant fever consumed her, and her mind wandered occasionally, especially that day, when the recollections of home seemed powerfully

present to her. At last, overcome with fatigue, she lay down on the ground, wrapped up in her plaid. I sat beside her, promising to awaken her when, as she said, 'her father should return from the ploughing.' She fell at length into a profound slumber, motionless and apparently breathless, her head resting in my lap. I myself could no longer resist the inclination to sleep, in spite of the continual roar of the cannon. Suddenly I was aroused by a wild unearthly scream close to my ear; my companion stood upright beside me, her arms raised, and her head bent forward in the attitude of listening. A look of intense delight broke over her countenance, she grasped my hand, drew me towards her, and exclaimed—'Dinna ye hear it? dinna ye hear it? Ay, I'm no dreamin', it's the slogan o' the Highlanders! We're saved; we're saved!' Then, flinging herself on her knees, she thanked God with passionate fervour. I felt utterly bewildered; my English ears heard only the roar of artillery, and I thought my poor Jessie was still raving, but she darted to the batteries, and I heard her cry incessantly to the men—'Courage! courage! hark to the slogan—to the Macgregor, the grandest of them a'. Here's help at last!' To describe the effect of these words upon the soldiers would be impossible. For a moment they ceased firing, and every soul listened in intense anxiety. Gradually, however, there arose a murmur of bitter disappointment, and the wailing of the women who had flocked to the spot burst out anew as the colonel shook his head. Our dull Lowland ears heard nothing but the rattle of the musketry. A few moments more of this death-like suspense, of this agonising hope, and Jessie, who had again sunk on the ground, sprang to her feet, and cried, in a voice so clear and piercing that it was heard along the whole line, 'Will ye no believe it noo? The slogan has ceased indeed, but the Campbells are comin'! D'ye hear, d'ye hear?' At that moment we seemed indeed to hear the voice of God in the distance, when the pibroch of the Highlanders brought us tidings of deliverance, for now there was no longer any doubt of the fact. That shrill, penetrating, ceaseless sound, which rose above all other sounds, could come neither from the advance of the enemy, nor from

the work of the sappers. No, it was indeed the blast of the Scottish bagpipes, now shrill and harsh, as threatening vengeance on the foe, then in softer tones, seeming to promise succour to their friends in need. Never, surely, was there such a scene as that which followed. Not a heart in the Residency of Lucknow but bowed itself before God. All, by one simultaneous impulse, fell upon their knees, and nothing was heard but bursting sobs and the murmured voice of prayer. Then all arose, and there rang out from a thousand lips a great shout of joy which resounded far and wide, and lent new vigour to that blessed pibroch. To our cheer of 'God save the Queen,' they replied by the well-known strain that moves every Scot to tears, 'Should auld acquaintance be forgot,' &c. After that nothing else made any impression on me. I scarcely remember what followed. Jessie was presented to the general on his entrance into the fort, and at the officers' banquet her health was drunk by all present, while the pipers marched round the table, playing once more the familiar air of 'Auld lang syne.' "

[*Extracted from a letter written by M. de Bannerot, a French physician in the service of Mussur Rajah, and published in "Le Pays," under date, Calcutta, October 8.*]

WORDS OF THE WISE.

HE who is catching opportunities because they seldom occur, would suffer those to pass by unregarded which he expects hourly to return.—*Johnson.*

I hate to see a thing done by halves: if it be right, do it boldly; if it be wrong, leave it undone.—*Gilpin.*

Advice, like snow, the softer it falls, the longer it dwells, and the deeper it sinks into the mind.—*Coleridge.*

Religion deters not from the lawful delights which are taken in natural things, but teaches the moderate and regular use of them, which is far the sweeter; for things lawful in themselves are in their excess sinful, and so prove bitterness in the end. And if, in some cases, it requires the forsaking of lawful enjoyment, as of pleasure, or profit, or honour, for God, and for his glory, it is generous and more truly delightful to deny things for this reason, than to enjoy them. Men have done much this way for the love of their country, and by a

principle of moral virtue; but to lose any delight, or to suffer any hardship for that highest end, the glory of God, and by the strength of love to him, is far more excellent and truly pleasant. The delights and pleasures of sin, religion indeed banishes; but it is to exchange them for joy that is unspeakably beyond them. It calls men from sordid and base delights, to those that are pure delights indeed. It calls to men,—"Drink ye no longer of the cistern; here are the crystal streams of a living fountain." There is a delight in the very despising of sinful delights, as that in comparison with them the other deserves not the name, to have such spiritual joy, as shall end in eternal joy; it is a wonder we hasten not to choose the joy, "but it is because we believe not."—*Leighton.*

GOLDEN RULE.—Make God the first and last of all thy actions; so begin that thou mayest have him in the end; otherwise I doubt whether it had not been better that thou hadst never begun.

Wealth is not the way to heaven, but the contrary; let all your care be how to "live well," and you may be sure, that you will never die poor.

I know not which is the worst, the bearer of tales or the receiver, for the one makes the other. We should no less hate to tell than to hear slanders. If we cannot stop others' mouths, let us stop our own ears. The receiver is as bad as the thief.

So live with men as considering always that God sees thee; so pray to God, as if every man heard thee. Do nothing which thou wouldst not have God see done. Desire nothing which may either wrong thy profession to ask, or God's honour to grant.

Afflictions are the medicine of the mind; if they are not toothsome, let it suffice that they are wholesome. It is not required in physic that it should please, but heal.

Sin and punishment are like the shadow and the body, never apart. Never sin went unpunished; and the end of all sin, if it be not repentance, is hell. Next to the not committing a fault, is the being sorry for it.—*Henshaw.*

God doth sometimes permit the wicked to have, but impicity permiteth them not to enjoy, their temporal blessings upon earth.—*Hooker.*

EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND.—It is not scholarship alone, but scholarship impregnated with religion, that tells on the great mass of society. We have no faith in the efficacy of mechanics' institutes, or even of primary and elementary schools, for build-

ing up a well-conditioned peasantry, so long as they stand dis severed from the lessons of Christian piety. There is a charm ascribed to the scholastic system of Scotland; and the sanguine imagination is, that by importing its machinery into England and Ireland, it will work the same marvellous transformation there, on the character of their people, that was experienced amongst ourselves. But it is forgotten, that a warm and earnest Christianity was the animating spirit of all our peculiar institutions for generations after they were framed; and that wanting this, they can no more perform the function of moralising the people, than skeletons can perform the functions or put forth the faculties of living men. The scholastic is incorporated with the ecclesiastical system of Scotland; and that, not for the purposes of intolerance and exclusion, but for the purpose of sanctifying education, and plying the boyhood of our land with the lessons of the Bible. The scholarship of mere letters might, to a certain extent, have diffused intelligence amongst the people; but it is mainly to the presence of the religious ingredients, that the moral greatness of our peasantry is owing.—*Chalmers.*

PORTSMOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

MANY of our readers have from time to time perused with lively interest the accounts which we have published of the progress of our interesting and important congregation at Portsmouth. Our friends at Portsmouth deserve to succeed. There are amongst them men of energy and faith. Even in these "hard" and trying times they come forward boldly, and ask us to give them a few thousand pounds to enable them to build a commodious place of worship.

Their appeal is one of the strongest we have heard for many a day—their claims cannot be set aside. It will be a disgrace to our Church, and the Christians of England, if they neglect or abandon such a work.

We entreat particular attention to the following "Appeal to the Christian Sympathies of the Friends of the Soldiers and Sailors of all Denominations, especially to the Presbyterians of England, Scotland, and Ireland:"—

Portsmouth, with its garrison and naval port, its soldiers and sailors from all parts of the three kingdoms, and its teeming population of 80,000 souls, is always a point

of great national interest. Its dockyard, factory, arsenals, ships and fortifications form important elements of the nation's greatness, and immense sums of public moneys are annually expended thereon.

Our appeal is on behalf of the immortal souls who are the mainspring of this great garrison and arsenal. The numerical strength of the garrison is about 4,000 men. The average number of Presbyterian soldiers is about 400, many of whom have wives and families.

The number of seamen and marines in the Royal Navy varies very much from time to time; still there are connected with this branch of the public service a great number of Presbyterian families always resident at Portsmouth.

Besides being the chief naval port and a great garrison town, Portsmouth is the grand gateway for England's armies to and from all her distant colonies, and all parts of the world.

In the year 1854, an army of upwards of 40,000 men met at and left Portsmouth for the seat of war in the East; Portsmouth was the last English ground on which many a brave soldier and sailor trod in that devastating war with Russia. In the springs of 1854-55 a Baltic fleet, manned by over 30,000 men, assembled at and sailed from Portsmouth.

Again, in 1856, upwards of 60,000 men were landed from the Crimea at this port. Many of these men returned with bodies shattered and torn with disease and battle, only to find a grave on English ground. It was a reproach to Presbyterianism, which we are now endeavouring to efface, that here it had neither church nor pastor to minister to these sick and dying men. Those only who have visited our hospitals in the time of sickness or the approach of death can realise the value set on the visits of the Christian pastor at such seasons.

Britain is again roused from her short peace—her sons and daughters of all ranks and of all ages, some of her missionaries and ministers of religion, have been brutally murdered, and her power is once more severely tested; again she has prepared for war, and sent forth her armies to battle, concentrating once more the interest of the nation upon Portsmouth. Since May last another army of nearly 30,000 men have passed through our port to India; of these, whole regiments have worshipped with us for many Sabbaths, such as the 42nd and 93rd Highlanders, with numerous companies of other corps.

Unhappily this important station had been, up to September, 1856, left unoccupied by the Presbyterian Church, and her communicants had no church of their own to

worship in, after the manner of their fathers, and no pastor to care for their souls; but on the 14th of that month a preaching station was commenced under the sanction of the Presbytery of London, and has since been carried on with most encouraging success. The attendance of soldiers has averaged every Sabbath 200, besides a congregation of naval and dockyard officers and men and civilians, averaging 220. The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been repeatedly dispensed amidst lively expressions of gratitude, on the part of many, for the renewal of these great privileges of the Lord's house; and the receipts, exclusive of a liberal grant from the Home Mission Fund of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England, have amounted to £200. Following up these hopeful beginnings, it is now proposed to erect a Presbyterian church in Portsmouth, in connection with the English Synod. This, including the expense of ground and building lease, will cost not less than £3,000, and in making this appeal to the Christians of our own communion, and to the friends of the soldier and sailor of whatever denomination, the Committee would state that the great leading objects which they propose to accomplish in connection with the erection of such a church are the following—viz., 1st, that the simple gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ should be proclaimed with all earnestness. 2nd, that pastoral superintendence should be extended to the soldiers and sailors of all ranks, and to their families, in the hospitals, in the barracks, and in their homes. 3rd, that the pastor, elders, and other members of the Church should extend their Christian care and good offices to the helpless wives and children left behind by our brave men who are far away—a point of great interest, especially in such a town as Portsmouth, in which 350 wives with their families have been left by the army proceeding to India alone.

The two first objects have already been accomplished during the past year—namely—preaching the gospel and pastoral visitation; and we know and are assured that much good has already been done. The latter can only be accomplished by the Church when fully organised.

This earnest appeal for aid in accomplishing the work is made in the full confidence that it will meet with a warm response from the many friends of the soldier and sailor throughout the length and breadth of the land. And will it not be a comfort to those who give a willing offering to this part of God's work to reflect that they are rearing up a Church within whose walls the message of mercy and of a Saviour's dying love may be heard by many of our friends and

our brethren for the last time before leaving their native shores in their country's service, and whose best interests ought to be especially dear to us, at such a time as the present, when they have approved themselves the noble defenders and rescuers from savage cruelty of our beloved but helpless countrywomen and their children.

The Committee regret that, after many endeavours, they have not been hitherto successful in obtaining any assistance from Government in this work of providing spiritual instruction, &c., for the Presbyterian soldiers and sailors of Portsmouth, but they earnestly hope and believe that compensation for this disappointment will be provided by augmented contributions of Christian liberality.

LEWIS MAITLAND, President.

London, November 21st, 1857.

As convener of a Committee appointed by the Presbytery of London, to assist the Local Committee of the Presbyterian congregation of Portsmouth, in carrying out the important design of erecting a Church in that interesting locality, I beg to recommend this undertaking, in the most earnest and cordial manner, to the favour and liberality of the Christian public. The resources of the congregation itself being very limited, the work can only be carried out by means of a large amount of external aid. Little pecuniary assistance can be

looked for from our brave soldiers and sailors for whose benefit the erection is mainly designed. If they fight our battles and protect our homes and sanctuaries at the peril of their lives, it is but a small return that their fellow-countrymen should provide for them churches to worship in, in all our principal garrison-towns and naval ports. At a time when the spirit of true Christianity is spreading widely in the army and navy, and not a few of their most renowned chiefs are devoted Christians, such a mode of expressing the nation's gratitude and admiration for our gallant defenders is sure to be highly appreciated by these brave men themselves; and it is peculiarly befitting that the hour of their high exploits and triumphs abroad, should also be the time selected by their fellow-Christians at home for adding to the amount of their spiritual privileges. It is hoped that many Christians in the three kingdoms will assist in the present effort to raise a soldiers' and sailors' Church in the soldiers' and sailors' town of Portsmouth.

In name of the Committee,

PETER LORIMER, D.D.

NOTE. Captain Maitland, 14, Portland Terrace, Southsea, and Mr. Spence, Mile-End Terrace, Landport, have been appointed Trustees of the Building Fund, by whom Subscriptions will be received, or by any of the Members of the Committee.

Correspondence.

MR. EDITOR,—You deserve well of your readers and the Church, for bringing forward so prominently last month the subject of "Ministerial Support." I must demur, however, to this phrase. I do not think it conveys a just idea of the subject. It is not ministerial support so much as the keeping up of ordinances, the means for the building up of saints, and converting sinners, or, in a word, the glory of God in the conversion of the world. It gives the claim too much a party claim, whereas nothing can be less so. Ministers worthy of the name need not starve unless they choose; there are plenty of avenues for talent, and, if this be wanting, there may be bone and sinew, the market value of which in farming or trade, or in the ordinary occupations of the "working classes," is higher than in many cases Christian people put upon the ministry. In truth, therefore, what is termed "ministerial

support" involves the whole question of the existence and triumph of Christianity in the world.

If the newspaper report of last Synod is to be depended upon, this matter was discussed there, and remitted to a committee. Perhaps you could tell us whether this committee has ever done anything. Or is it another instance of a quiet shelving of an important matter by handing it over to a do-nothing committee? I am persuaded that if a proper committee had been appointed, they might have done something; for much of the shortcomings of which office-bearers complain, proceeds from ignorance. If the duties were laid plainly before the *Christian* part of the people, there would be no lack. We cannot expect those who are *not* Christians to feel much interest in such a thing. They must be first induced to "give their own selves," and then they may be dealt with. But

with regard to those who have already done this, all they need is to have the matter plainly laid before them. And who could

do this better than a committee of earnest Christian men?

T. A.

Missions.

CHINA.—OPIUM.

On the afternoon of Monday, December 14, the annual meeting of friends in Scotland of the Chinese Mission at Amoy, was held in Queen Street Hall; Col. Anderson, R.A., in the chair.

From the Annual Report of the Committee we take the following extracts:—

“Confining the present remarks to our own section of these missions, it will be remembered that at the period of the last Annual Report, Mr. Carstairs Douglas was the only one of our missionaries at Amoy, Mr. Burns being occupied at Swatow. In the beginning of December, however, Mr. Douglas was cheered by the arrival of Mr. David Sandeman, and, we doubt not, Mr. George Smith has ere now reached the same destination; and when Mr. Grant, now on his voyage, is added to the list, there will then be four young missionaries in the field, in addition to the senior missionary at Swatow.

“Of these the Scottish Auxiliary have sent forth Messrs. Douglas and Smith, whilst our English Presbyterian friends support the other three.

“The ordination of two Missionaries has been an important event in the proceedings of the past year. The Committee, shortly after their appeal to the supporters of the mission to make the raising up of new labourers a special subject of prayer, had their attention directed to the Rev. George Smith, who cheerfully accepted the appointment; and his friend and fellow-student, the Rev. John Macpherson, whose thoughts had for many years been turned towards China as a field of labour, was invited by the English Presbyterian Church to accompany him. Arrangements were made for these two brethren sailing in the same ship. But so desirable a plan was frustrated by an unexpected illness, which obliged Mr. Macpherson to abandon the prospect of preaching the gospel in a land towards which his prayerful desires had long been directed.

“Mr. Smith was ordained at Aberdeen on the 8th June, and sailed on the 7th July in the *Spray of the Ocean*. It is hoped that by this time he has reached Amoy. The few weeks prior to his departure were laboriously occupied in visiting numerous congregations in Aberdeen and other parts of Scotland; and while the ship was detained in the river, his last Sabbath was spent in joining in the services, and preaching on the evening of the Communion Sabbath, in the Rev. Mr. Thompson’s church at Woolwich. Mr. Macpherson’s place has been supplied by another like-minded friend and fellow-student, the Rev. Alex. Grant, who was ordained in Regent Square Church, London, on the 19th October, and set sail in the *Florence Nightingale* on the 6th November. These excellent and devoted young men have gone out, as they themselves expressed it, ‘not as mere adventurers, but as representatives of the Christian Church at home, in order to reap the fruits of their prayers.’

“The Committee cannot pass from this subject without noticing in how many cases in the history of this mission, the fondly-cherished hopes of those who had dedicated themselves to this service have been disappointed. This has occurred in no fewer than three cases in the past year. They desire to sympathise with those who, in the providence of God, have been called to abandon the prospect of entering into such a promising field of labour as China presents, and to express the confidence that they will be used at home in forwarding the cause.

“FUNDS.—The expenditure of the year has been £510 3s. 2d., and the receipts £777 1s. 8d. These have been augmented by £200, out of the ordinary course of income,—the proceeds of “The Way Home,”—which were dedicated to the sending out of a second missionary

from Scotland, and have more than sufficed for that purpose. In future, to meet the support of two missionaries now in the field, and native agents and students, an annual income of at least £600 will be required. The numerous contributions received from the young is an encouraging feature; and the Committee take this opportunity of mentioning, that a fund has been commenced in England exclusively by the children, for the support of a missionary in China, an object which it is expected will soon be carried into effect. Among the other contributions, many are from different parts of Scotland—the Highlands and Islands—from those who in former days derived benefit from Mr. Burns's preaching, and who feel it to be an unspeakable privilege to keep up the connection, by aiding him and his fellow-labourers in their work in China. It is pleasant to think that thus, by means of this mission, the remembrance of former days of blessing may be kept alive.

"Before closing this Report, the Committee cannot omit calling attention to the opium trade, as continuing to exercise a most baneful influence on the population of China. Very remarkable events have occurred during the past year, indicating that if the Church were but faithful in testifying against this traffic, a way would be found for enabling this country to wash its hands of further participation in this national sin. A society in London has been vigorously exerting itself, in the early part of this year, to inform the public of the facts of the case, when suddenly all eyes were directed to China, in April last, by the collision at Canton, disclosing the very unsatisfactory state of our relations with that empire, and requiring the immediate departure of the Earl of Elgin, as a plenipotentiary to the court of Peking, backed with a considerable naval and military force, to restore order and to negotiate a new treaty.

"But an arrest was laid upon these operations ere the troops had reached their destination, by the direful news from India; and those very troops with which we purposed to chastise China were recalled, in order to protect our own Indian territories. It is not less remarkable that the districts where the opium is principally cultivated, such as Patna, Benares, Malwa, and Oude, are the districts most seriously affected by this disastrous mutiny. It is therefore

certain that the opium produce of this season will be materially affected by these disasters, as the Company's advances to the small farmers, amounting to about a million and a half sterling, cannot be effectively made, in the present disturbed state of the country. The consequence of this is, that already the price of opium in China has reached a very high figure; thus effectually reducing the number of smokers, from the poorer victims being unable to purchase their wonted indulgence. This method of gradually weaning the Chinese of the vicious habit, was the very object those had in view who were seeking the abolition of the traffic, and which seems now in process of accomplishment by this remarkable interposition of Providence. All that the Government has now to do, is to complete this process by a total prohibition of the growth of the poppy in British India, excepting what is required for medicinal purposes. To those who have no belief in a superintending Providence, these events may seem mere accidents; but to the Church they seem to constitute a loud call to consider her duty, and to follow the leadings of Providence in this matter. The Committee would refer to Mr. Douglas's very decided testimony, as to the evils of opium-smoking, in his letter of September last, given in the Appendix.

"While missionaries at and around the five ports (with the exception of Canton) experience considerable liberty in preaching the gospel, China continues torn with intestine war, aggravated by famine. No reliable accounts have been received of the progress of the revolution, but the rebels are unquestionably in great force in some of the central provinces. The imperial treasury being exhausted, the Government now resorts to the sale of rank, and other base expedients, for raising money. At Shanghai and Ningpo, the local governments have even consented to levy a tax of sixteen dollars a chest upon opium, to furnish supplies for the Imperial troops. This, however, is without the sanction of the cabinet at Peking. But it is well known that attempts will be made by our own Government to induce the emperor to legalise the traffic, and so obviate any infraction of the existing treaty by the East India Company. The Indian mutiny has providentially prevented the attainment of this object for a time at least. Strenuous efforts should therefore be made now to

resist such an attempt on the part of a Christian Government to encourage and perpetuate the vices of a heathen nation."

After an interesting statement of the proceedings of the mission by D. Matheson, Esq., Dr. Candlish said:—He would not enter into the details of the mission, but the rapid sketch given by Mr. Matheson, especially as connecting this mission with other missions, and tracing the analogy apparent in the history of all these missions, was deeply interesting. Reflecting on the proceedings of the past year, he thought they had reason to acknowledge the hand of God in his dealings with us as a nation in connection with this very mission of China. They had reason to apprehend during that time that a very decisive, prompt, and successful effort would be made on the part of Government to procure the legalisation of the opium traffic in China. There was every reason to believe that a strenuous effort would be made by the plenipotentiary sent out from this country to get the East India Company out of the difficulty in which it was involved in connection with the raising of opium in India, by either persuading or coercing the Chinese Government to legalise the traffic in China,—a traffic which was at present illegal according to the Chinese law. Of course it would occur to any mere statesman, actuated by mere reasonings of statesmanship or politics, without a regard to higher considerations, to be a very short and simple way of cutting the knot by getting the traffic legalised. The whole difficulty would in this way be got over, and the East India Company could be no longer charged with ministering to an illegal traffic; but God had by those troubles which had arisen in India interposed in a very remarkable way, and had asserted the march of things, as regards our intercourse with China, and now they had a period of suspension. To all appearance there would be no settlement of Chinese affairs until things were settled in India; and the efforts of all Christian men and of all Christian Churches should be directed to secure that in any settlement of the affairs of India, this country should wash its hands from the iniquity of the opium trade altogether. (Applause.) The Chinese Government was itself the best judge of what was good for its own people; and if that Government thought right to prohibit the opium trade, it was not for the Government of this country to assert the contrary.

Professor Smeaton stated that both Mr. Smith and Mr. Grant, the two missionaries recently sent out, had attended his class, and that they were men whose simplicity and godly sincerity, and whose talents, high scholarship, and singular devotedness, would render them worthy associates of those noble men who were already in the missionary field in China. This country was now getting a new view of missionary labour, and had opportunities presented to it for seeing how important it was. The events of India and China were reading to them a most emphatic commentary on the importance of missionary labour, and proclaimed that this British nation of ours must be a missionary nation, or must bethink herself of abandoning her overlet empire. (Hear, hear.) He rejoiced to find that they were discovering that missionary work was not meant only to be occasionally taken up, but that it was a part of the Church's organic growth, and that the time seemed to be ripe for taking measures to enter on the field in the East at once with redoubled energy. It must have gratified them to hear that this Amoy mission had been carried on without let or hindrance in those troublous times, and that the storms which had been passing over China had left it untouched, to be, he hoped, a centre of influence for good and light in that benighted land. He hoped that those mighty events which had occurred of late would sweep away many petty jealousies about missionaries, and many suspicions about their interfering with their home work, and lead churches to take a right view of their duty in supporting the cause of Christ both at home and abroad, and of maintaining a constant warfare with error, immorality, and ungodliness.

Sheriff Cleghorn observed, that their prayers had been signally answered; for while they were regretting last year that although they had funds, they were unable to get any labourer to follow Mr. Carstairs Douglas, two well-qualified missionaries had subsequently offered themselves, and had been sent forth. It was also an encouraging circumstance in connection with the Mission, that the native converts seemed to be so extremely fitted for the task of propagating the gospel amongst their fellow-countrymen.

INDIA AND THE OPIUM TRADE WITH CHINA.

Two excellent articles on this important subject have recently appeared in the *Witness*. We believe they are from the pen of a gentleman, who resided for many years in China, and who is an active supporter of the Amoy mission. He begins by showing the necessity for immediate action in regard to this question,—that now is the time when our Indian policy is to be revised, and a new treaty made with China, for the abolition of the opium monopoly, and for the restriction of the poppy culture to purely medicinal purposes; and that the future prosperity of our Indian empire really demands such a course.

But there are some, he says, "who, although willing to admit the evils to the full extent, are yet indisposed to stir the question just now. They think it an inconvenient season, as the Indian Government can ill afford to lose nearly four millions sterling out of a total net revenue of twenty-two millions. Others again, looking to the China trade, seem to think opium not only an absolute necessity to the Chinese, but necessary also for the maintenance of the China trade, as without this opium we should have nothing to exchange for tea and silk but the precious metals, of which we have but little to spare."

The writer considers both these views erroneous; he believes that "the welfare of our Indian empire requires that this source of revenue be abandoned; and, as a merchant, on the occasion of his bankruptcy, is in the best position for abandoning past malpractices, turning over a new leaf, and starting afresh on sounder principles, so there could not be a more fitting opportunity than the present crisis in India for revising her past conduct in regard to the opium trade, and adopting a sounder course of policy for the future."

The production of opium in India is, to a great extent, a forced one. The following is an instance. A military officer of high standing, lately returned from India, makes this statement:—"In March 1857, I was in the company of the late P—M—, then a deputy opium agent in the Cawnpore district. He told me that it was his duty to superintend and encourage the cultivation of the poppy, and that his salary, consisting of a commission on the produce, was regulated by the area of cultivation. Part of his duty in the cold weather, from October to March, consisted in moving over the district, to ascertain, by personal inspection, the growth of the poppy, for the sowing of which he had made advances; and of course, as a Government official, he threw in all the weight

of his position to coax and humour the cultivators into sowing the poppy in preference to cereals, cotton, and other useful produce, although they had great reluctance to doing so."

"It is a significant fact, that the opium produce of this season will fall far short of the usual quantity, in consequence of the present mutiny. The usual advances cannot be effectually made in the disturbed districts, where alone opium is produced; and even now the merchants in China are speculating on this result by demanding very high prices for the drug on that coast. This, again, has the effect of considerably reducing the number of victims to opium-smoking in China, as the poorest of them are unable to purchase so costly an indulgence.

"Yet, in the face of these judgments in India, interposing as they do in such a remarkable way on behalf of China, by turning back our troops from the chastisement of that empire to protect our own territories, and by drying up to a large extent the supplies of that drug which is so injurious to the Chinese, it is well known that our plenipotentiary in China has instructions to endeavour to get the opium trade legalised by the Emperor, thus perpetuating and extending indefinitely this curse on the Chinese race!

"Now, therefore, is the time for the people of this country, acting on the plain leadings of Providence, to require of the East India Company, as the only remedy for the opium evils, the total prohibition of the growth of the poppy in India, as tobacco is prohibited in our own country, excepting of course so much as may be required for medicinal purposes. If this is not done now, we shall, in all probability, see ere long the opium trade transferred into the hands of this Government as part of an inheritance from the East India Company, which, once accepted by us, will subside into an established system, from which it will be almost impossible to extricate ourselves hereafter."

"It is contended by some that opium is a necessity not only for the Chinese as consumers, but for British trade with China, as affording a means of payment for tea and silk, and therefore they conclude, as the opium trade must exist, it should be legalized.

"This opinion is held chiefly by those interested in the trade, or by others who may be unconsciously influenced by their views. The *Times'* correspondent in China, for instance, seems to have formed his opinions while enjoying the princely hos-

pitality of the opium merchants. He goes on board an opium store-ship, the odour of the drug strong in her spacious cabins, with a letter of introduction to the commander; he is forthwith feasted, as he tells us, on Shanghae mutton, and iced Saunterne, and then under the soothing influence of such treatment, he ruminates on the opium question; and the reader may guess the conclusion at which he in due time arrives. It were well if our authorities in China had not been too often subjected to the same mesmerising influence."

The Chinese could do without opium. The evil then is only beginning.

"It is estimated that there are at the most ten millions of opium smokers; but China has a population of 360 millions, and, amongst the 350 millions who do not smoke, there exists a healthy public feeling against the vicious habits of the other ten millions,—an instance of which may be found in the fact, that a Chinese mother shrinks from giving her daughter to an opium smoker. Moreover, while opium-smoking is all but incurable in the individual, it is not necessarily so in a nation, because the individual victims may die out, and the others remain uncontaminated; and there is nothing easier than to suppose that those ten millions of victims might be so hedged round by the better moral tone of the other 350 millions, by the government prohibitions, and by our own withholding of the supplies, that they must either abandon the habit or gradually become extinct. Could another supply of opium be obtained at once when ours failed them, this attempt to wean the smokers might prove unavailing, but this is impossible. The supplies from other countries could only be small for some time to come, and the native cultivation would be opposed by the Chinese Government if it were for no other reason than it would lead to famine by supplanting the growth of rice and other grains."

The abolition of the opium traffic would not injure our China trade, for the traffic is positively injurious to it.

"Fortunately, we are not left here to mere theory, but can appeal to facts; for while British exports to all countries rose in ten years (from 1845 to 1855) from sixty millions sterling to ninety millions, our legal exports to China during the same period fell from £2,394,000 to £1,277,000; and this not because there was no China produce to pay for, but because opium cut out legal exports, and was doubled in quantity during these years: and now our legal export trade to this densely-peopled empire is quite paltry and insignificant compared with that which we might reasonably expect it to be. Let the supplies

of opium be cut off by one-third annually for the next three years, and we believe that British manufactures would at once assume an importance which they never enjoyed before, and would gradually come into demand, so as to fill up the gap left by the opium; while during the transition period, the enhanced value of our smaller means of payment would compel the Chinese to part with their tea and silk at cheaper rates than formerly. Can it be doubted, then, that in some such way as this, supply and demand would adjust themselves, and in a few years a healthy trade would spring up, beneficial alike to Britain and to China?"

Since the above appeared in the *Witness*, the *Times* has published another letter from its correspondent in China. It is evident, from all this man's letters, that he has about as much sympathy with, and understands as much of evangelical Christianity, as the most prejudiced Buddhist in China. Still there are lessons we may learn, even from such a writer, and his testimony is of value in some things. We therefore append the following, on the obstructions which the opium trade raises to the work of the Missionary:—

"The English opium trade, even although Indian opium should happen (as M. Huc, somewhat incorrectly, I fear, states) to be consumed only by magistrates on the judgment-seat and other distinguished persons, is a great thorn in the side of the British missionary. The controversy which the Chinese politely evade finds exercise among the Christians. An English missionary related to me quite recently how he had met and vanquished a Portuguese priest who confronted him in hostile manner in the streets of a northern city. Having no European language in common, and Latin being found to be an inconvenient medium, they dropped fluently into the Shanghae dialect. The gaping Chinese stood round and wondered, while the priest accused the English minister of being about to teach the Chinese a modern heresy, only 100 years old, invented by a wicked king and an abandoned woman; and while the priest was in his turn twitted with teaching an idolatry stolen from the temples of Buddha. We have all classes of missionaries here, except only 'high' Churchmen, whereof I have met none. The ordained clergy in China often abandon their Prayer-Book, and conduct their services in the Presbyterian form.

Some of the sectarian ministers carry their Protestantism with a dauntlessness that make us start or shiver. There was a reception day some time since at the yamun of the Taoutai of Shanghae city. The Roman Catholic Bishop had just had his audience, and an uncompromising Protestant of an extreme sect took his place. Now, this Taoutai had the reputation of being a clever, a malicious, and a sarcastic man, accustomed to gather all the European scandal of the settlement, and to cast it into the faces of the missionaries—Roman Catholic, Catholic, and Protestant. ‘The head man of your Christians is just gone out,’ maliciously remarked the Taoutai. ‘Sir, he is not our head man. He is not a Christian at all; he is an idolator; he worships the cross.’ ‘And do not you?’ asked the innocent Taoutai. ‘No, I do not.’ ‘And yet if I were to lay the cross on the floor at your feet, you dare not trample upon it?’ ‘I would,’ answered the unhesitating Christian missionary. Of course, there must be jealousies and difficulties and heartburnings among men holding such very different opinions. Even some Americans of the more violently hostile sects point out to the Chinese that the English are opium-dealers, suppressing the fact that American houses are quite as eager in disputing the profits of the trade. Sometimes it happens that in the midst of a missionary discourse an old man comes forward (either spontaneously or at some one’s suggestion), and tells the crowd what a good son he once had, and how that son kept him in comfort, but that he has lately taken to spend all his earnings in opium-smoking, and leaves his father unprovided for. The old gentleman wishes to know whether it is the countrymen of the ‘elder teacher’ who sell that opium. We must imbue ourselves with the exaggerated notions which the Chinese have of the sacredness of parental despotism to fully understand the effect of such a question. If while a candidate was addressing the electors of the borough of Mainelaw, with their wives and daughters in general tea-party assembled, Mrs. Brown Jones Robinson Smith were suddenly to appear, leading in Mr. B. J. R. Smith, staggering in the last stage of maudlin tipsiness—if Mrs. Smith were then, addressing the candidate, and pointing to her spouse, to ask whether the report was true that he, Mr. Juniper, was the person who made and sold the liquid which had reduced

Mr. Smith to the condition of a beast—and if the candidate, thus adjured, felt constrained to confess that he certainly was the proprietor of a rather extensive distillery, the interruption would not be more provoking than those which sometimes occur at Amoy or Shanghae.

“The English missionaries meet these things with a constancy almost as bold as the chronology of the Portuguese priest. They say that India is not England, but a country to which China is indebted for her two great curses—opium and Buddhism. As to its effect upon the conversion of the Chinese, the suggestion is simply absurd; but it is a weak point in the armour of controversy, and our missionary countrymen felt it very bitterly.

* * * *

“One word upon a subject to which I shall probably not have occasion to recur. I have sometimes spoken untenderly of topics much cherished by some of our Protestant missionaries. There is, however, no subscriber to the various bodies which send preachers forth who thinks more highly of the usefulness of these men than I do. I will not say that they are making sincere Chinese Christians,—those who say this must be either governed by a delusion or guilty of a fraud,—but they are doing the work which, if China is ever to become Christianised, must precede its conversion. They live among the Chinese people, they speak their language, they are known to them by needs of charity and beneficence; their wives are the friends of the poor friendless, Chinese woman; their children prattle to the natives in their own tongue, and are the messengers of their parents in little offices of love. The merchants in China are almost universally large-hearted and benevolent men; they will give largely, but they have not either time or taste for such offices as these; nor would the wildest philanthropist expect it from them. Yet this must be done by somebody if China is to be opened. Even if I had no hope that the cold speculative systems of Laotze, Confucius, and Buddha could be overthrown, that those palaces of ice would some day melt before the fervid quickening fire of true religion, still I would say, plant missionary establishments in China; but remember always that a fool, a bigot, or a fire-brand, can do more evil there than ten good men can repair.”

Notices of Books.

The Gloaming of Life. A Memoir of James Stirling. By the Rev. ALEXANDER WALLACE. Glasgow: Scottish Temperance League. London: Tweedie, Strand.

JAMES STIRLING was no ordinary man. His name has been well-known throughout the towns and villages of Scotland for the last five-and-twenty years. His early days were spent as a cowherd at his native place, in the neighbourhood of Strathblane. Thence he went, when fourteen years of age, to learn shoemaking in Paisley. He was there set down in a workshop in an old garret among eight or ten workmen, "some of them old soldiers and men-of-war's men, some highland, some lowland, and some Englishmen"—a set of sottish drunkards. Their first work was to "break in" the simple country boy to their own debased habits, a work in which they ultimately succeeded. At sixteen he was a confirmed drunkard, and for nearly *forty* years he remained a slave to the besetting vice. But even "after so long a time" the hand of the great Deliverer laid hold of him, and "he brought him up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock." He had returned to his native place and become the father of a family.

"One day he was sent for to a public house in the morning, and remained drinking there till the evening. He had been oscillating between this house and his work for several days before, as was his usual practice when the drunken fit was on him, unshaved, poorly clad, and without a penny. His will seemed entirely in the grasp of a master vice, that had all but made a complete wreck of conscience, bonds, and affection, and to all appearance he was drifting hopelessly onward, to ruin that now 'had him in the wind.' But help, remonstrance, resistless appeal, conviction, were now at hand, and God employed the simple but startling question of a little child to arrest the drunken father in his downward career.

His faithful wife had always been in the habit of observing family worship with the children when he was absent. She sat down with a heavy heart and with tears in her eyes that night to this exercise, which had so often been her solace. Looking to the younger children, she said, "Poor things, my heart is sore for you and your father." What follows is so affecting that our old friend must tell it himself.

"I had been all day in the public house, and at night, when I came home, my wife, as usual, was reading a chapter to the

children. When she was so engaged, I went in slipping like a condemned criminal. The portion of Scripture read was the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, in which these words occur:—"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Our youngest boy, then about four years old, was lying with his head on his mother's lap, and just when she had read these awful words, he looked up earnestly in her face and asked: "Will father be a goat, then, mother?" This was too strong to be resisted. The earnest, innocent look of the child, the bewilderment of the poor mother, and, above all, the question itself, smote me to the heart's core. I spent a sleepless, awfully miserable night, wishing rather to die than to live such a life. I was ashamed to go to church on the following Sabbath. I stopped at home, and read the 'Six Sermons on Temperance,' by Beecher, which had found their way into the house, but how I never knew. But so it was, that when looking about the house for some suitable book to read on the Sabbath, I laid my hands on them, and they seemed as if written and printed and sent there for me alone. I was now decided. My resolution was taken, as it had never been before. All the men on earth could not tempt me to drink, clear or brown, thick or thin."

Sometime after this occurred a temperance meeting was held in the village where Stirling then lived, and a temperance society was formed. The minister took the chair, and was the first at the close of this meeting to sign the pledge:—

"On the original list of names, now before us, the third name, written in good round ploughman style, is that of James Stirling. As soon as he had publicly enrolled his name, one of his sons, then a boy, who was present, ran home as fast as a pair of the nimblest feet in the village could carry him, to tell his mother the glad news, who was lying unwell. 'Mother! mother!' he cried out in eager haste as the door flew open and he rushed to the bedside, 'father has put down his name, and the minister has put down his, and they're all putting down their names.'

“Thank God!” ejaculated the broken-hearted wife, who had passed through a long night of weeping, and on whom light was now breaking at last; ‘thank God!’ But she could say no more till she found relief in tears. And such tears! It was the first time in her married life that tears had started from the long-sealed fount of joy. ‘Thank God,’ she said, after a pause; ‘if he has signed it, he’ll keep it. Yes, he’ll keep it,’ she added, with still greater emphasis, and her pale face was flushed, as it had not been for many years, with the pride of early love. ‘Thank God! he has signed it, and I’ll sign it too, and ye must all sign it, for, oh, surely the time, the set time, to favour us, and many puir families, has come at last!’

“What joy was in that dwelling that night as the father returned from the meeting with the strength of a new resolve and the light of a new hope beaming in his face. That night was as life from the dead to that family as they gathered around the fireside to offer up the evening prayer. There were voices tremulous with deep emotion in that little circle as the opening verses of the 116th Psalm were sung to one of the old melodies of the heart, that formed an appropriate symphony for the words—

“I love the Lord, because my voice
And prayers he did hear,
I, while I live, will call on him,
Who bow’d to me his ear.
Of death the cords and sorrows did
About me compass round;
The pains of hell took hold on me,
I grief and trouble found.”

“The usual number of verses was sung, but a mutual sympathy drew them on to sing more. It was a pleasant song, and they seemed as if they could have sung it to the close, but the words—

‘Thou didst my mourning eyes from tears,
My feet from falling, free,’

touched a ‘responsive chord’ in every heart, and the singing became a long-drawn sob, till all wept. It was truly affecting to hear the father attempt to read the parable of the prodigal son from the old seal-skin covered Bible which had belonged to his mother. It was too much for him. He got so far, till he was obliged to close the book and cast himself upon his knees at the throne of mercy, from which no true penitent has ever been driven. He ‘cried from the depths,’ and he was heard. The recording angel bore to heaven from that little circle the offering of at least one broken and contrite heart, and a victory was won that night which will never be forgotten throughout eternity.”

This was the beginning of a new life to him

—a life of unwearied activity and extensive usefulness. He became one of the most powerful advocates of the temperance cause in this country, was eventually employed as travelling agent for the Scottish Temperance League, and in the course of sixteen years he visited about 500 different places in Scotland, England, and Ireland—some of the places from six to sixteen times over—and addressed nearly 5,000 meetings in churches, halls, schools, barns, and sometimes in the open air. He continued this work with unabated zeal, travelling through the most remote and difficult parts of the country, till he was upwards of eighty years of age. He died in faith and peace in March 1856, and some of those who knew and loved him have erected a handsome monument to his memory.

Mr. Wallace has produced a valuable biography, full of instruction and interest. Many of the characteristic features of humble Scottish life are described with great ability. The book is calculated to be very useful; it is admirably adapted for the working classes—especially in Scotland—and as the price is only a few pence, it ought to be circulated by thousands.

The Young Pilgrim: a Tale illustrative of the Pilgrim’s Progress. By A. L. O. E.
The Giant-Killer; or, The Battle which all must Fight. By A. L. O. E.

The Roby Family; or Battling with the World: A Sequel to the “Giant-Killer,” &c. By A. L. O. E.

Truth is always Best: or, “A Fault Confessed is half Redressed.” By MARY and ELIZABETH KIRBY.

The Rambles of a Rat. By A. L. O. E.
The Better Way: or, What do I live for?

By Miss RANDALL BALLANTYNE.
T. Nelson & Sons, London, Edinburgh, and New York.

WE know of no publishing firm that more richly deserves the thanks of the juvenile community than that of the Messrs. Nelson. Here is a budget of New Year’s Gift-books, all shining in crimson and gold. The plates are beautiful, and the paper appears as thick and as fine as the most aristocratic note-paper you can find in a West-end stationer’s. The six volumes above-named will form excellent additions to the juvenile library, pleasing, instructive, and useful. The first is intended as a “Child’s Companion to the Pilgrim’s Progress”—a kind of translation of those ideas the author considers beyond youthful comprehension, into the common language of every-day life. We have been somewhat suspicious of translations of the Pilgrim’s Progress, ever since the extraordinary performance of this nature of the Rev. John Neale, of

Sackville College. But there is no Popery or Puseyism in the volume before us; all is as sterling as if penned by Bunyan himself.

The others are also well-written tales, inculcating such wholesome and useful lessons as, in this work-day world, we all require to learn.

From the same publishers we have also received parts of the following monthlies:—

The Children's Paper.

The Play Hour.

The Little Pilgrim; or, Home and School Evangelist.

The titles of these beautiful periodicals indicate the nature of their contents; they are, as their gay covers tell us, full of beautiful pictures, and interesting stories for Sunday and week-day, or family reading. They are amongst the cheapest publications of the kind, and the most beautifully illustrated that we have before seen.

The Sheepfold and the Common; or, Within and Without. Vol. I. Blackie & Son.

THE main object of this work is to present the grand doctrines of the Christian faith in a pleasing and attractive manner, by a simple narration of the events of every day life. It is an "old friend with a new face," for it was originally published under the title of the *Evangelical Rambler*, above thirty years ago. Upwards of 60,000 copies of it was then sold, and it is believed much good resulted from its perusal. As it has long been out of print, the present edition, which contains much new matter, will be as good as new to the present generation. The volume before us is tastefully got up, contains about eighteen very beautiful illustrations, and forms a very handsome book for a New Year's Gift.

Apt to Teach; an Address. By the Rev. ROBERT STEEL, of Salford.

THIS Address was delivered to the teachers of the Salford Sunday School Union, and is published by the Committee. For the benefit of those engaged in the work, we extract the following valuable passages on the necessary

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

"1. *Special preparation for his class.*—No man can teach either old or young who trusts to his general knowledge and his fluency of speech. Less can he do so with the young. The truths to be taught must not only be familiar, but prepared so as to be intelligibly communicated. When the late Dr. Chalmers was professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews, he kept a Sabbath school, and his biographer informs us that though the scholars were of the poorest children in the neighbourhood, 'Dr. Chal-

mers prepared as carefully as for his class in the University; some stray leaves still exist on which the questions for the evening are carefully written out.' A teacher must gather materials for aiding his work of educating the young. He must not serve God with that which cost him nothing. He should have beaten oil for the sanctuary lamp which he holds before the young.

"2. *An aptness to teach.*—I have said that this is an acquisition. Though there are some more likely to be successful teachers than others, it is only the trial faithfully performed that creates adaptation. For this there are several requisites. There is the *resolute endeavour*. That once formed is half the victory. Perseverance is but the progress of earnest purpose, and success is generally its result. No man ever exemplified this iron resolution more than the late George Stephenson, the inventor and maker of railway locomotives. He had everything against him when he began the line from Manchester to Liverpool. Engineers of eminence, all classes of people, believed that Chat Moss to be incapable of being made to bear a railway. When Mr. Stephenson was asked his opinion, he said, 'WE MUST PERSEVERE.' Such men are rare. But their example nerves the courage of a thousand fainter hearts.

"*The teacher must come down to the child's level.* You cannot have intelligent conversation, nor impart instruction intelligently to any man without commencing on a ground common to both. Nor can you teach a child but by condescending to his level. This calls not for childishness but *child-likeness* in teaching. Dr. Watts' Hymns are not childish, but they are child-like. So are Todds' Lectures to Children. So, in a special manner, are Old Humphrey's books. These interest the old as well as the young, yet they are seldom beyond the level of a child's mind. What was the secret of this adaptation? Step into the good man's study and I will show you. 'He sat from hour to hour at his little table, his books spread round him, the Holy Bible in the most conspicuous place, and a large card before him, on which were written in a bold style the three words—ALLURE—INSTRUCT—IMPRESS, to remind him of his work, and the way in which it was to be done.' That was the secret of his success. He adapted himself to the youthful mind, and his works evince how well he had considered his work. Come down to the child's level, and take his hand. He will ascend as lofty a summit as you can climb with him, if you give him time to take each step intelligently.

"*Reason upwards.* State the simplest

truths first, and advance only as you take the scholar with you. This process may be slow, but it is a secret of adaptation which the wise will cultivate. In the fable the tortoise outstripped the hare.

"To reason with a child, or any comparatively ignorant person, for the purpose of imparting instruction, the truth must be delivered in a comprehensible way. Few are willing to confess ignorance. Most make general acknowledgments of intelligence. The only means for thorough and intelligent education is *catechising*. By continuous discourse you cannot impart so much instruction as by catechising. You may probably disclose more of your own information by the former, but you secure more to the scholar by the other. Mr. Vanderkiste, in his stirring narrative of *Six Years' Mission in the Dens of London*, presents a case where the contrast I have alluded to came out most strongly. 'Visiting a sick man with a new missionary, I requested him to read and instruct him, which he did, detailing to him our fallen condition, our need of salvation, and the redemption purchased for us, in a very correct manner, and then reading a portion of a chapter from the Gospels in proof of what he had said. The poor man listened with every appearance of attention, and when my young friend said, "You know," or any other interrogative, he replied "Certainly, sir," or "In course, sir." My companion appeared pleased with the man's attention to instruction, and I thought it time to undeceive him. "Mr. —," said I, "my friend has been taking much pains to instruct you, and now I will ask you a few questions." "Do you know who Jesus Christ was?" "Well, no," said he, after a pause, "I should say that's werry hard to tell." "Do you know whether he was St. John's brother?" "No, that I don't." "Can you tell me who the Trinity are?" "No, sir." "Are you a sinner?" "Oh, certainly, sir, we are all sinners." A pause. "Have you ever done wrong?" "Why, no, I don't consider as ever I have." "Did you ever commit sin?" "Why, no, I don't know as ever I did." "But do you think you're a sinner?" "Oh, certainly, sir, we're all sinners." "What is a sinner?" "Well, I'm blest if I know rightly; I never had no head-piece."

"You might go round many classes, and find good earnest teachers descanting on the great doctrines of Scripture to seemingly interested scholars, whom you might undeceive in the same way. I do not suppose that you would find the same ignorance, but a lack of apprehension of the truths which the devoted teacher had been enforcing.

"*Catechising* is the adaptation of the

teacher to the scholar to meet this necessity. It is, besides, the best mode of education. It was used greatly in the early church. Some of the most eminent Fathers exemplified it in their public instruction. At the period of the Reformation it was extensively and successfully employed. The Council of Trent, in their preface to a Catechism prepared for the express purpose of counteracting Protestantism, speak of 'the mischief which the Protestants have done the Catholic Church, not only by their tongues, but especially by their writings called Catechisms.' This system of instruction is more fitted to communicate truth to the youthful mind, and just as it is able to bear it. It breaks down the matter to the capacity of the learner. Presenting the truth intelligently, it awakens intelligence. The question sets the mind a-thinking—the great desideratum in our schools—and elicits in the answer the expression of the thought. This is a great matter in the education of the young. It gives their minds material for thought, and puts the thought into exercise. Besides, it fixes the truth in the mind, and weeds out error. The form of sound words, by this mode, becomes an amount of truth really possessed. This is the adaptation characteristic of all successful teachers. Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, was one of the best educationists of modern times. He had constantly several hundred boys under his care. Mr. Stanley, his biographer, informs us that 'His whole method was founded on the principle of awakening the intellect of every individual boy. Hence it was his practice to teach by *questioning*.' Fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord, cultivate this adaptation of your office to the souls of your charge. Be not satisfied with a 'Yes' or 'No.' Endeavour to ascertain the amount of intelligent information which each of your scholars possesses. This is the most efficient method of reaching the conscience—the great object of your labour. It enables you to convict of sin, to impress the heart, and to prompt the inquiry, 'What must I do to be saved?'

"*Strike the iron when it is hot.*' It is then soft, capable of impression and form, which it will retain for ever. Seize favourable opportunities for impression. When the heart is aroused with interest, and the mind is anxious and solemnised, press home the great salvation—urge its acceptance—show the danger of delay and the necessity of immediate acceptance—say 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice.' Invite with tenderness. Let your affection show itself. Let the law of kindness be on your lips. Speak lovingly, that you may win the youthful heart. Reveal a Saviour's love—his arms stretched forth to save. Be in

earnest. Travail in birth for your scholars until Christ be formed in them. Make much of your opportunity. Be pointed, be brief, lest interest flag and impression die. A few sharp strokes may mould the heated iron. A few burning words may save a soul.

"These are the seasons which the Spirit of God loves to bless. Over these He bends with deepest interest. Grieve him not. Pray for his presence—His aid—His regenerating power. Be conscious of your dependence on His blessing. Try him, prove Him herewith, and see if He will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing. From your class will come forth those who will bless God throughout eternity for your zeal and love.

"Above all be *exemplary*. Let your life and carriage illustrate your teaching. The adaptation of a holy life is one of the most important elements in your successful labour. Scholars are observant; quick to detect inconsistencies and to take advantage of them. One such seen and believed will destroy the labour of years. A seriousness of manner and devotedness of life will be a constant lesson, which scholars will vainly endeavour to forget. For this you will need prayer, watchfulness, and sobriety. You must take heed to yourselves; that you may save yourselves and them that hear you."

Gnomon of the New Testament. By John Albert Bengel. Now first translated into

English, with original Notes explanatory and illustrative. Revised and Edited by the Rev. A. R. Faussett, M.A., of Trinity College, Dublin. Vols. I. & II. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

ALL we mean to do at present is simply to announce the appearance of the first two volumes of this truly valuable work. When we say that this noble translation of Bengel's *Gnomon*, in five handsome volumes, is being published at the low price of 28s., we need not add that the publishers have thereby laid the reading public under new obligations. In his preface the editor says, "If all were able to read Latin notes fluently, it would not be desirable that Bengel's powerful language should be diluted by transfusion into another tongue. But as there are many who read Latin imperfectly, to whom much of Bengel's meaning is lost, and as there are still more who cannot read Latin at all, and yet are diligent Bible students, I trust that the religious public will consider that a debt is due to the spirited publishers of the present work."

The Preface and Notes on Matthew, were translated by the Rev. James Baudiel, of Wadham College, Oxford; the Rev. James Bryce, late of Aberdeen, translated from Romans to Hebrews, inclusive; the Rev. Dr. Fletcher, Head Master of the Grammar School, Wemborne, translated from James to Revelation, inclusive; and the portion from Mark to Acts, was translated by the talented editor himself.

Presbyterian Church in England.

THE "MESSENGERS."

For the last two years we have dispensed with what appeared to us, and to most other people, a very unmeaning and unnecessary appendage to a volume of magazines—a *preface*, which usually consists of nothing more than a few commonplace expressions and compliments, and an appeal for more subscribers. But while we dispense with the former part of it, we cannot so easily afford to do away with the latter. Will our friends and readers therefore bear in mind that there is the same necessity now as has existed at the beginning of every year since the *Messenger* was started, eleven years ago, for using exertions to obtain new

subscribers for us throughout our congregations? Our lists are decimated every year by changes, removals, and deaths, and it is mainly through the exertions of friends helping us to fill up these by new additions that we are enabled to hold on our way. Much more assistance might be rendered us, in this way, in many of our congregations. Some ministers favour us with a pulpit notice at the beginning of each year; might not others kindly do the same? One such notice is more effective than many placards. We again repeat what we have often stated before—that the *Messenger* is not kept up for the sake of any pecuniary interest that any one has, or can have, in the publication; it lives solely for the interests

of the Presbyterian Church in England, and, therefore, it is with some degree of confidence that we solicit the good offices of our friends at the commencement of a New Year—for the increasing of the circulation of the *Messenger*, and also of the *Juvenile*.

HOME MISSION FUND.

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ALEX. GILLESPIE,
 Treasurer.

38, Gordon Square, London,
 20th August, 1857.

The Rev. Joseph Fisher thankfully acknowledges the following sums on behalf of the Southwark Church:—

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Presbyteries' Proceedings.

PRESBYTERY OF LONDON.

THIS Presbytery met at 51, Great Ormond Street, on Tuesday, 8th December, 1857, and was constituted.

Present: Rev. J. Wright, Moderator. Drs. M'Crie, Lorimer, Hamilton, and Weir; Messrs. Fisher, Ballantyne, Keedy, and Whyte, Ministers, with Rev. Messrs. Robinson (Etal) and Gamble; and Messrs. Matheson, Ritchie, Watson, and Morton, Elders.

The Presbytery proceeded to hear the trial exercises and discourses of Mr. William Mackintosh, theological student, which were unanimously sustained. Whereupon, the usual questions were put to Mr. Mackintosh, and were answered in a satisfactory manner. The Moderator then engaged in prayer, and gave license and authority to Mr. Mackintosh to preach the gospel within the bounds of the Presbytery.

Encouraging reports were given in of the progress of the preaching stations at Portsmouth and Plymouth, and also of the prospect of an iron church being, ere long, provided for the congregation at Bournemouth.

Dr. Hamilton reported that Mr. Brownlee had erected, at his own expense, on the Harrow-road, a new church, which he was desirous to hand over, free of expense, to the Presbytery. The building had been erected at the cost of 3,000*l.*

Dr. Hamilton moved that this Presbytery thankfully accept the gift of Mr. Brownlee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morton.

Mr. Chalmers moved, and Mr. Matheson seconded, that inquiry be made by a Committee of Presbytery into the whole circumstances of the case.

Dr. Hamilton's motion was withdrawn, in favour of a motion made by Dr. M'Crie, and seconded by Dr. Lorimer, as follows :

Dr. Hamilton having stated that a place of worship had been erected by Mr. Brownlee, which had cost nearly 3,000*l.*, that the church was now completed, and Mr. Brownlee offered it to the Presbytery as a free gift. The Presbytery, in the meantime, express their high sense of the munificence of the offer, but in consideration of objections made to the immediate acceptance of that offer, the Presbytery agree to the appointment of a Committee to make inquiry into all the circumstances of the case, and report to next meeting.

The motion was carried by seven to four, and a Committee of inquiry appointed accordingly.

Communion rolls were ordered to be handed in at the meeting of Presbytery in January, 1858.

PRESBYTERY OF LANCASHIRE.

THE Presbytery of Lancashire met at Rock Ferry, on Thursday, the 3rd December. The Rev. A. Cromar, Moderator.

Mr. Blyth was appointed Moderator for the next six months.

Mr. Lundie, the convener of the Parkgate Committee, reported that, after lengthened conference with Messrs Macfie, Mowbray, and other parties connected with the Parkgate congregation, it was agreed, under the circumstances, to recommend to the Presbytery to receive the congregation into the Presbytery of Lancashire, and to accept the offer of the congregation as contained in the accompanying docu-

ment, signed by Mr. R. A. Macfie and others. This document was to the effect, that the congregation at Parkgate bind themselves to pay a stipend to the minister, whom they purpose to call, at the minimum rate of £150 per annum, for six years, or such part of that time as the minister called may be their pastor, Mr. Macfie engages for himself that the congregation will be provided with a comfortable place of worship, free of rent, during that period, and be allowed to remain afterwards throughout the minister's incumbency at a rent of £30; or the congregation may, during that period of six years, buy the place from him for £400, paying expenses, and assuming liability for ground rent of £2 2*s.* It was also provided, that if there be further outlay upon the building, the amount of the same shall be added to the £400; but no alteration or enlargement will be made to which two-thirds of the session are opposed. Further, the minister, elders, and congregation, shall be under the discipline of the Presbyterian Church in England.

After lengthened discussion and deliberation, it was moved by Mr. Blyth, who left the chair for the purpose, and seconded by Mr. Forrest (Elder), to "receive, and adopt the report, express the thanks of the Presbytery to Mr. Macfie for the offer he has made; that the Presbytery would have preferred a more permanent arrangement, still, considering the great wants of the district, they do not feel at liberty to reject the offer, and agree to fix an early day for the moderating in a call." It was also moved by Mr. J. Paterson, and seconded by Mr. Forster "That the Report be not adopted in present circumstances." The roll being called, and votes marked, the first motion carried by a majority of seven to two. The Presbytery resolved accordingly. From which resolution, Messrs. Forster and J. Paterson dissented, because, it was not intended that the property should be put in connection with the Presbytery or Synod; Dr. Munro, who advocated the views of the dissentients, left the meeting before the vote was taken. The Presbytery agreed to meet at Parkgate on the 10th instant, at 7, p.m., to moderate in a call.

On the same evening, Mr. Henderson was ordained to the office of the

holy ministry, and inducted into the pastoral charge of the Rock Ferry congregation.

The Presbytery adjourned to meet at Liverpool, on 6th January next, at 11, a.m.

December 10. The Presbytery met at Parkgate, and moderated in a call in favour of the Rev. A. M. Bannatyne, Warrenford, the Rev. D. Henderson presiding. The call was sustained, and Mr. Lundie was appointed to prosecute the translation before the Presbytery of Northumberland.

PRESBYTERY OF NEWCASTLE.

THIS Presbytery held its quarterly Meeting on Tuesday, the 8th of December, Sederunt: the Rev. Dr. Paterson, Moderator; Messrs. Duncan, Miller, Hardie, Blake, Brown, Wrightson, Mackenzie, Stuart, and Reid, Ministers; with Messrs. Freeman, Lonie, and Richardson, Elders.

The Meeting having been duly constituted; Commissions from the sessions of St. John's and Laygate, South Shields, in favour of Messrs. George Lyall and James Black, respectively, were produced, read and sustained, and their names added to the roll.

The minute of last quarterly meeting was then read, and sustained. The minutes of two *pro re nata* meetings, held in consequence of a *fama clamosa* against the Rev. J. K. Anderson, of Gateshead, were also read; and, considering the circumstances of the case, it was moved, and unanimously agreed, that these minutes be sustained, and the acts of the said meetings approved.

The court then resumed consideration of Mr. Anderson's case. After deliberation, it was agreed to delay pronouncing finally upon it till Tuesday, the 22nd December.

Mr. Duncan then moved that the Presbytery transmit the following overture to the Synod, viz.—

“Whereas a resolution, carried in the synod, of this church, in its meeting held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the year 1857, specially authorising an organ to be used in public worship in two congregations, at Warrington, and St. George's, at Liverpool, is esteemed by a very large portion of

the ministers, elders, and people belonging to this church, to be not only inexpedient and unconstitutional, but contrary to Scripture, as also to the standards of this church, and is admitted by all to be a deviation from the uniformity of public worship hitherto practised among British Presbyterian churches. And whereas it is certain that the permission of such innovation has already caused extensive alienation, and dissatisfaction, and if not removed will be followed by very unhappy consequences to the peace, the stability and welfare of this church—it is humbly overtured by the Presbytery of Newcastle, that the Synod take this whole matter into its deliberate and prayerful consideration, and by re-establishing uniformity of public worship, without any exception, in all the congregations of this church, heal the wide-spread and deep dissatisfaction, already occasioned, and so avert further evils that must else be apprehended.”

This motion having been seconded, and there being no amendment, was carried. Mr. Lyall entering his dissent.

Committees were appointed to examine the school at Seaton Delaval, and the schools of the Falstone district.

Mr. Wrightson gave notice that at next quarterly meeting he would move that the Presbytery consider the Mosaic law, in regard to seduction, as laid down in Exod. xxii. 16, 17, and Deut. xxii. 28, 29.

The attention of the court having been called to a pamphlet by Mr. Wrightson, a Committee was appointed to examine said pamphlet, and report.

The next quarterly meeting was appointed to be held in the John Knox Church, on the second Tuesday of March, at eleven, a.m.

The court then adjourned, to meet again on Tuesday, the 22nd instant, at eleven, a.m.

Closed with prayer.

PRESBYTERY OF BIRMINGHAM.

THIS Presbytery met at Dudley on Tuesday, December 1st. Sederunt: Revs. Thomas Macpherson, Moderator; Tullo, Brown, and Lewis, Ministers; with Messrs. Mackie, Murray, Ringland, and Craig, Elders.

The session records of Wolverhampton congregation were laid on the table, and Mr. Tullo (Moderator, *p. t.*) and Mr. Eunson, having stated that there was no prospect of the resumption of ordinances there, the Presbytery again expressed their great regret at this circumstance, and recorded their warm thanks to Mr. Eunson for the liberality manifested by him in discouraging circumstances for so many years.

Replies from Stafford to the queries of the Home Mission Committee were read, and the Moderator was directed to attest them, and in consideration of the efforts made to pay off the debt, to forward them with strong recommendation.

A deputation from parties resident in Cheltenham, desirous of forming a

Presbyterian congregation there, was introduced by Mr. Lewis, and a memorial to that effect was laid on the table; and the Presbytery, after inquiring into the circumstances of the case, recorded their gratification at the apparently favourable prospects, and appointed a Committee to confer and cooperate with the memorialists, empowering them, if they saw fit, to make all needful arrangements for the supply of ordinances.

Session records and congregational account books were directed to be presented as usual at next meeting of Presbytery.

The Presbytery adjourned to meet at Dudley on the first Tuesday of February, at one o'clock.

Intelligence.

MEETING OF MINISTERS AND OFFICE-BEARERS OF THE LONDON PRESBYTERY.

A SOCIAL meeting of the ministers and office-bearers connected with the Presbytery of London was held in the College Hall, Great Ormond Street, on Tuesday evening, the 8th of December last. After tea, which was provided at their own expense, Dr. Hamilton was called to the chair. Having opened the meeting with praise and prayer, in a most interesting speech he adverted to various topics of a practical nature relating to the prosperity of our congregations and our success generally as a Presbyterian Church in England. By previous arrangement, with a view of giving a practical turn to the meeting, the representatives of several congregations were called upon to give some account of their proceedings for the past year, and to make any practical suggestions which might occur to them. The first called upon was the Rev. William Ballantyne, of

LONDON WALL CONGREGATION,

which has been removed to a suburban district during the past year. Mr. Ballantyne said it was well known that the London Wall congregation had been long a City congregation more in name than in reality. For many years the City element in it had been small, as the great majority of its members and adherents were drawn from districts *without* the City, not from within it. However, it had now ceased to be a

City congregation even in name, as it had been recently transplanted to another site in Church Road, De Beauvoir Square. That seat was selected as the most eligible that could be obtained, being in all respects most convenient for the bulk of the people. By the blessing of God on the unity, and heartiness, and liberality of the congregation, aided by the generous contributions of friends in the metropolis and throughout the country, they had erected on that site a new, and commodious, and beautiful church. It was opened for public worship on Sabbath, the 18th day of October, when Dr. McCrie preached in the morning, himself (Mr. Ballantyne) in the afternoon, and Dr. Hamilton in the evening. The Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel preached on Wednesday morning, the 21st of October. On all these occasions the attendance was large; and the collections received on behalf of the Building Fund amounted to the handsome sum of nearly £160. That sum might be taken as an indication of the liberality that preceded the opening of the church. Mr. B. felt it to be an encouraging circumstance that the London Wall congregation had taken possession of their new church in a body, not more than three or four individuals being lost to them by the change, and these, persons who really *could not* worship regularly anywhere but in a church very near their dwellings. During the few

weeks they had been in this new church, they had received an addition of *one-third* more than they numbered at London Wall. It was liberally true that he was preaching every Sabbath to hundreds more than he had been wont to preach to in the City. Every week individuals and families were attaching themselves as stated worshippers. And there was the pleasing prospect that this time-honoured congregation was about to renew its youth, and to present to himself and the office-bearers a greatly enlarged sphere of usefulness.

Mr. B. also mentioned that on entering the new church, the office-bearers had done away with the system of pew-rents. He would not trouble the meeting with a statement of the reasons that led them to this course. He would simply say that, after long and careful consideration, they came to the conclusion that the house of God ought to be free; that the rich and poor ought to meet in it on equal terms; that it was not the province of elders and deacons to put a price on places in it; and that the maintenance of gospel ordinances in it should be left entirely to the free-will offerings of the Christian people. This was a system which the Free Church of Scotland had declared to be right, and which was adopted with great success in many Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches in this country and in the colonies. It was too soon yet to speak of its working in this instance. But the measure of liberality which his people were already showing under it, and the presence and growth of Christian principle, led him to believe that their treasury would be amply furnished for the support of the Gospel amongst themselves, and for the increase of their usefulness in the district in which their lot was cast. Mr. B. concluded by adverting to the Sabbath schools and the Young Men's Society connected with the congregation. Though they were now removed from the City, he intimated that they would maintain their Sabbath school in Golden-lane, where was an average attendance of upwards of 200 children; and that they would support their missionary in the Moor-lane district. A large hall in the neighbourhood of the new church would be opened as a Sabbath school on the first Sabbath in January, by the teachers who have long laboured in Bell-square School, Bloomfield-street.

[We have been obliged to leave out, till our next, the remainder of this report, to make room for some items of intelligence.]

YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY IN CONNECTION WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GROSVENOR SQUARE, MANCHESTER.

THE twenty-fourth anniversary meeting of the above society was held in the lecture hall of the church, Grosvenor Square, on Monday, the 30th November. The chair was occupied by the president for the present session, Mr. H. Young; and the vice-chair by the secretary, Mr. R. A. Bertram. The customary loyal toast having been proposed, and the report of the society for the past year read, Dr. Munro proceeded to read his annual paper, the subject of his address on this occasion being "The Origin and the Originator of Modern Science." The main object of the address was to dispel the cloud of unmerited detraction which has so long obscured the illustrious name of Lord Bacon. The manners of the time were sketched with a powerful and poetic pen, and the incidents of Lord Bacon's downfall so lucidly detailed, that it became evident from the simple statement of the facts, that Pope's famous sneer—

"The greatest, wisest, *meanest* of mankind,"

and the ungenerous attacks which have since been made upon Bacon's fame, have, along with the hereditary malpractices of the court over which he presided, only a slight indiscretion (his own vague confession of general guilt made at the instigation of the king) for their historical basis; that the corrupt acts of which he was accused lay rather with the Chancery than the Chancellor; and that it is high time that his character should be clearly redeemed from the stain which intrigue originally fastened upon it, and justice done to his high moral and religious qualities. The rev. gentleman then proceeded to an analysis of Bacon's works, and to an exposition of the 'new method,' the system of inductive philosophy therein contained, and traced in a strain of powerful eloquence the cumulative benefits which this master-mind has conferred on his race.

In the course of the evening, *inter alia*, addresses were delivered on "Commerce," by Mr. R. A. Bertram; on "Modern Science in its reference to Religion," by Mr. Wallace; on "Literature and the Fine Arts," by Mr. W. Moore; and on "Our Allies, the French," by Mr. Lawrence. The services of the ladies having been duly acknowledged by Mr. Ferguson, and the usual complimentary votes of thanks passed, the proceedings, which had been pleasantly diversified by the performances of the able choir, under Mr. Philip's direction, were brought to a close about half-past ten o'clock.

CHELTENHAM CHAPEL.

ANOTHER meeting of persons favourable to the formation of a Presbyterian congregation in Cheltenham, was held in the chapel on the evening of the 26th of November. Mr. Joseph Ward presided, and the Rev. George Lewis, of Dudley, who was present, offered prayer. The chairman expressed his belief that they had all assembled with but one object in view—the opening once more of that beautiful and commodious house for divine service.

Mr. Williams gave an historical sketch of the chapel. Previous to its erection there was but one Dissenting place of worship in the town, the Baptist Chapel, now known as the old Bethel Chapel. Religion was in a fearful state, the Sabbath desecrated, and the sanctuary deserted. Yet there were some who had a desire for the preaching of the gospel. These communicated their ideas to the Rev. Rowland Hill, through whose instrumentality Cheltenham Chapel was erected, the expenses of the building being defrayed by voluntary contributions. This was in the year 1809. For about three years the pulpit was supplied by eminent ministers, the service being conducted after the fashion of the Countess of Huntingdon's connection. After the lapse of that time, the Rev. John Browne was invited to take the oversight of the flock, which he accepted, entering on his duties in the year 1813. The memory of his many natural and acquired gifts, his tender appeals, his solemn warnings, and his glowing descriptions of a Saviour's love, which characterised his ministry, still lived among them. Mr. Browne died in 1846; after this several ministers successively occupied the pulpit until last March, when the chapel was closed. Thus (continued Mr. Williams) it would be seen Cheltenham Chapel had occupied no unimportant position amongst the religious institutions of this town and neighbourhood. It had the honour of shedding abroad the gospel light when all surrounding it was dark, and its own light and prosperity only faded as other light was beaming from adjoining pulpits. Still, there was no reason why Cheltenham Chapel should not again do a great work. It might be changed in name a little, but what of that? The chief thing would be preserved as before; the same divine truths would be promulgated as in years past; the same and not another gospel would be preached. And he, as well as many others, were ready to join hand and heart with their Presbyterian friends in the work.

Mr. J. Scougal remarked upon what Presbyterianism had done for civil and

religious liberty, and the noble and proud position it held on the other side of the Tweed, at the same time defending it from the stigma which unquestionably attached to it throughout a large part of England, where Presbyterianism was considered but another name for Socinianism. He also entered fully into the form of church government, and having concluded his sketch of what Presbyterianism really consisted, he again urged that it had nothing to do with Socinianism. So far as doctrine was concerned it was decidedly Evangelical. He hoped they would unite cordially in seeking by a union of such a kind as that now proposed to restore prosperity to this place of worship.

The Rev. George Lewis addressed the meeting at considerable length, and concluded by expressing a hope that Presbyterianism might be hailed among the other Christian Churches as a fellow-worker for good in the preaching of those great Evangelical doctrines which they held in common.

The meeting concluded by resolving—“That application should be made to the Presbytery of Birmingham to take this congregation into connection with them, and under their jurisdiction.”

WIGAN.—The Presbyterian Church in this place has for some time been in such a state, as to prove a serious drawback to any attempts to establish a congregation. It was so dirty and uncomfortable, that hardly any could be prevailed upon to attend it, except those who were attached to it, either by principle or old associations. We are, however, happy to state, that by the efforts of the congregation, aided by friends in other places, it has—at an expense of £300—been so completely renovated, as to be now not only a very comfortable, but also a handsome place of worship. The Rev. S. Hamilton re-opened it for public worship on Sabbath the 29th of November. The sum of £25 was collected from the large audiences which assembled. Yet, on account of the repairs having cost considerably more than was originally estimated, there still remains a debt of about £50. This sum, though it may appear small to many, is sufficient to prove a considerable burden to this weak and struggling church. The committee are very desirous, if possible, to have it liquidated; and hope that those who desire success to their cause, will lend them a helping hand. There seems every prospect, that if now the Wigan Church receive a little fostering care, under the blessing of God there will soon be a flourishing congregation. Subscriptions will be gladly received by R. Lang, Esq., Junr., or the Rev. D. Blyth.

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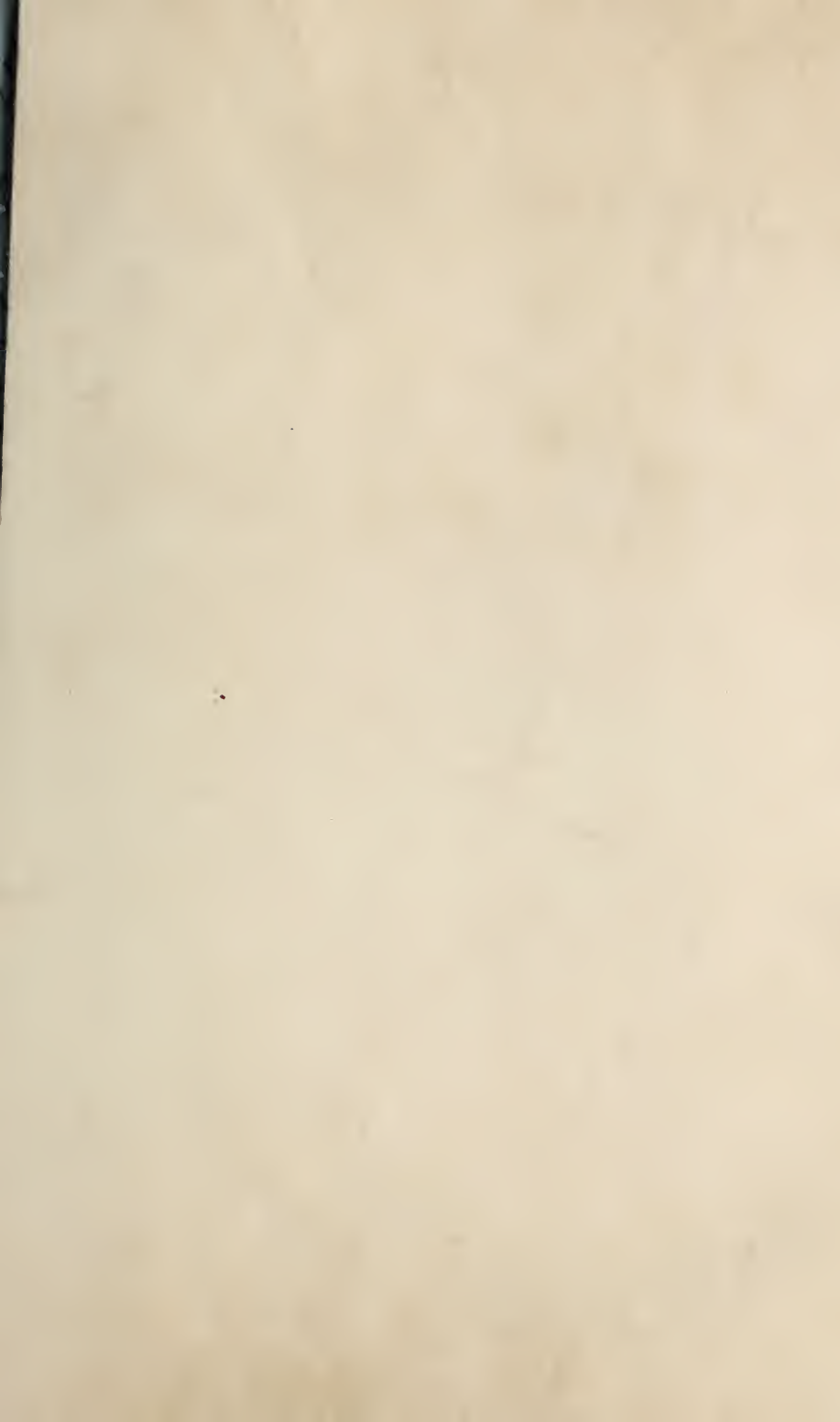
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